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GOKULAM

October 2003
Vol. XVI, No.4

Of all created things the loveliest,
And most divine are children.

-William Canton



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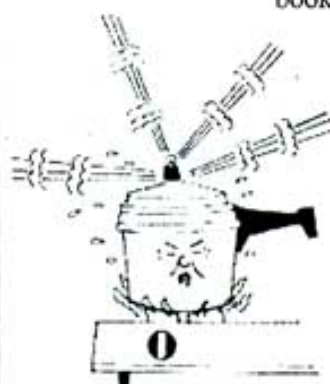
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JACK OF ALL TRADES!

Dear Reader,

Sampath goes to karate class every Sunday. He learns music from a vidwan thrice a week; gets coaching in tennis twice a week; attends a computer class on alternate days and takes maths tuition daily. Besides all these, he has to do his homework, help his parents in household chores and also find the time to prepare for class tests which are held frequently. He has to get good marks and be among the top ten in his class to please his parents!

Sampath is always tense and highly strung. He has no time for pleasantaries, no time to look at the moon or the flowers. He will not stop to listen to the koel. His favourite book is still unread.



Sampath is my neighbour's son and I feel sorry for him. I think of my younger days when we were not so much "pressure cooked". I used to be back from school by 4.30 pm and after a light tiffin, I always rushed to the 'maidan' to play cricket with my friends

until dark, when it was no longer possible to see the ball. Lessons were ofcourse important but we were not expected to be a 'jack of all trades'!

I know that times have changed and the youngsters these days have to face very tough competition. But there is no point in stuffing the mouth with more than what it can chew. So, I appeal to you and your parents.

Ask yourself what you are really interested in. It is easy to find out. You are interested in that which gives you happiness. Try to excel in that, besides your studies. This will give you some leisure to enjoy life.

For many like Sampath, life is a big burden and childhood is the worst part of it. Let us try to change that feeling.

After all, all of us have only one childhood.

- Editor

The Magazine for Children

"GOKULAM IS LIKE AN ENCYCLOPEDIA!"

✉ The 'Ganesha and the Moon' story was good in the September issue and so also information on 'Pathri'. 'Dreams and Reality' was pathetic and heart - rendering. 'Roots' is the best article. It not only enriches our vocabulary but also educates us about the origin of words. So much has been packed in a single issue! GOKULAM is really like an encyclopedia!

- V. Mahadevan, Std VI,
P.S. Senior Sec. School, Chennai

✉ The September issue of GOKULAM was very interesting. I have made my own Ganesha based on the creative corner.

- P. Deiva Prabhu, Std IX,
Sainik School, Coimbatore

✉ Thankyou very much for giving us so much information about Harry Potter in GOKULAM. I am a great fan of Harry Potter and GOKULAM too!

- Suvarna, Std X, St. Joseph's
Convent High School, Belgaum

✉ I like the 'Hello Doctor' section in which Dr. Ganesan answers all the queries pertaining to health, diseases etc.

- Shadab Khan, Mumbai



✉ I have been reading GOKULAM regularly for the past two years. My English has improved and I am able to write on my own now.

- G. Naveen, Std IX,
Sri Sitaram Vidyalaya, Chennai

✉ I liked the stories 'Dreams and Reality' by Anjoo Sharon and 'My talking kitten' by Vaishali, in the September issue. I also liked the picture story 'The suit of Armour'.

- Vivek C. Vijayan, Std. VII,
Bangalore

✉ The poster of Harry Potter was excellent. Thank-you GOKULAM, for your nice and unique articles. 'Long Live GOKULAM!'

- Astha Shah, Std. V,
Dasmah, Kuwait

INSIDE THE WORLD OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY

We were truly amazed to note the vivid imagination of children in creating stories using Harry Potter characters. We have to admit we had a tough time choosing the three prize winning entries!

Here is the 3rd prize winning story. Namratha wins a cash prize of Rs.200/-

Enjoy the dessert first. The main course and starters follow!

I had received my answer papers in school today and found that I had done awfully in Physics. I came home and after a quick dinner, went to bed early. I was very tired and soon fell fast asleep.

When I awoke, the sun, was streaming in brightly. I looked at my watch. It was seven. I looked around me and gasped!

I wasn't in my bed! I was in a long corridor buzzing with tense-looking people wearing long robes of black. The place was very unfamiliar. Startled, I realised that I too was wearing a black robe with a blue badge, bearing an eagle!

Suddenly, someone tapped me on my shoulder. I did a double-take on seeing the girl, very familiar, with bushy hair and large front teeth!

"You are... Hermione Granger!" I declared, my eyes as round as tennis balls.

Hermione nodded, perplexed, "Well! Yes, so I am! You better get ready for your Potions exam or old Snape will have a fit!"

A tall lanky boy with flaming red hair



and freckles splashed across his nose, approached us. "You'd better get in. Snape is in an awful mood. I think he's failed me," he told Hermione.

Hermione glowered at him, "Well! Ron, thanks!", she said snappily, spun on her heel and left.

Ron Weasley stared at me. "I don't remember seeing you at the sorting ceremony" he said.

"I'm new."

"Which house?"

"Ravenclaw", I blurted out.

Ron raised his eyebrows. "Ravenclaw? Interesting! You must've heard of Cho Chang, then."

"I know Cho. Where's Harry?"

Just then, a boy with cat-green eyes glinting behind his round glasses ran over to us. He had a lightning shaped scar across his forehead, that was partially hidden under a thick fringe of untidy black hair.

Hermione emerged from the Potions room and beckoned to Harry. "Harry! You are to go in next. After you, this girl called Namrata from Ravenclaw has to go in."

Me? But...oh! I knew nothing about magic. I was just an ordinary Muggle!

Harry looked tense. I wished him luck and he disappeared inside the stone - room.

The Weasley twins and an African, Lee Jordan, arrived. "Hey! Can you give this wand





to Ron," asked Fred. (He was the boy with a large yellow 'F' knitted on his blue jumper!) I grinned. "Oh! Its no use trying to trick me with your fake wands. I've read all about them."

Lee Jordan guffawed. "What do you mean, read all about them?"

My eyes widened. "Don't you know? You aren't real. You are all characters created by J.K. Rowling. She has written books about you..."

George rolled his eyes. "No one here has ever heard of anyone called Rowling."

Just then, Harry came out of the Potions room. "You're to go in next. Good Luck," he said to me.

Feeling a dread of nervousness, I walked in to Professor Snape's Potions lab. I was greeted by a thin man with sallow skin, greasy hair and a cold sneer curling down his lips.

I muttered a nervous, "Good morning, sir." Snape nodded to me. "What would you get if I shrivelled up powdered lacewing?", he asked in a dangerously silky voice.

"I, uh... I don't know, sir."

"What is the difference between monkswood and wolfsbane?"

"Um... Dunno."

Snape glared at me. "Mix up a shrinking Potion," Snape almost bellowed.

I looked around and found a bottle labeled '**Dragon Blood**' on an alcove shelf. I emptied it into a pewter cauldron. I found another jar of '**Leech Juice**' and I stirred it in. I took down a bottle of '**Earthworm Essence**' and mixed it into the cauldron. The potion bubbled and whistled and turned a bright purple colour.

Snape examined the potion. He ladled a spoonful of it into a glass. "Drink it," he ordered. "If you shrink, you pass. Otherwise, you fail."

Feeling awful, I drained the glass, and choked. It tasted like cow-dung!

"Now let's see, you are...", Snape asked.

"Namrata, from Ravenclaw," I whispered.

I was glad to finally answer one question correctly.

Snape's sneer turned into a broad, mocking smirk. "That's right. You have failed your Potions exam with a big zero!"

★ ★ ★

I opened my eyes and sat up in bed. Ofcourse, it was all a dream, I felt sure. I got up and walked over to the bathroom. I looked at my reflection in the mirror and gasped. I was wearing a Ravenclaw badge pinned to the chest of my long, flowing black robe!

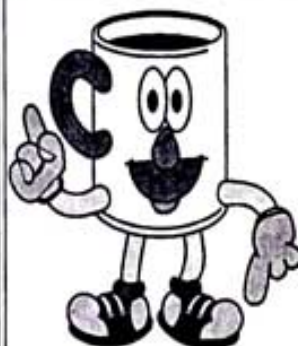
- Namratha Amarnath, Std VIII,
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"TRADITIONAL GAMES ARE FUN!"

1



Traditional games are having a revival of sorts today! Though children have always been playing games like ludo and snakes and ladders, games like *pallanguzhi*, marbles etc., are once again becoming popular. The craze of television and computer games is still prevalent but slowly and surely, board games and other old time favourites are being enjoyed by today's children.

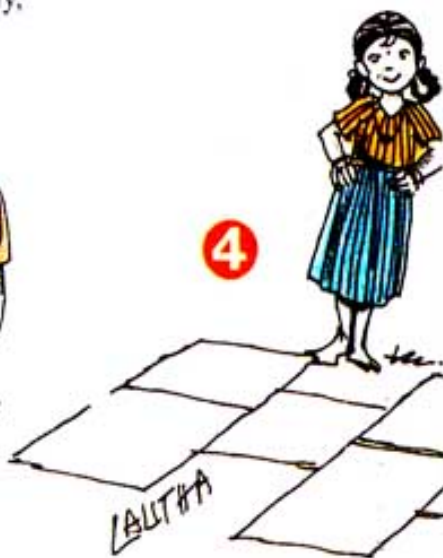
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2



4





The playing of these games brings families together, and this results in sharing of experiences, laughing and having fun. These games teach children to win and lose, and help to improve their motor and sensory skills and hand-eye co-ordination.

How familiar are you with these games? Here are some sketches. See if you can identify their names. Ask your grand parents or parents about them.

We have given the names of these games with a short description for each on page 71 for you...



SHOULD AERATED DRINKS BE BANNED OR NOT?

No, aerated drinks should not be banned. They help us quench our thirst when we go on long trips and provide good refreshment. So, good quality of Coke and Pepsi, prepared with great precaution is the need of the hour.

- **Ajit, Std.V, Rotary Lahary School, Madurai**

Aerated drinks should be banned. They are manufactured by using ground water which is contaminated with pesticides. These drinks quench our thirst only for a short period. They in fact, reduce the water content in our body. Consuming drinks like buttermilk, tender coconut water and fresh fruit juices help not only in quenching our thirst but also maintaining fluid level in our body.

- **A. Ashretha Latha, Std.X, B.V.M.School, Pollachi**

Children get enamoured by these aerated drinks by watching film stars, and sports celebrities advertise them on TV and print. These soft drinks contain poisonous substances like DDT,

Malathion, Lindane etc., which are very dangerous pesticides. DDT has been banned for use in agricultural fields, but we are consuming it in soft drinks. Terrible, isn't? Also, excessive consumption of these drinks may cause excessive carbon-di-oxide in our body which is very harmful.

Let's go in for coconut water, not for coco-cola, for fresh lemon juice and not for Limca.

- **P. Sai Deepak Std.VI, Sainik School, Korukonda**

Aerated drinks should not be banned. These soft drinks have been there in our country for decades. It is surprising that the presence of harmful pesticide residue has been discovered only now! I feel that this 'discovery' is an attempt to tarnish the reputation of Pepsi and Coke, thereby putting them out of the Indian market.

- **A Krishna Kumar, Std. IX, New Public High School, Bangalore**

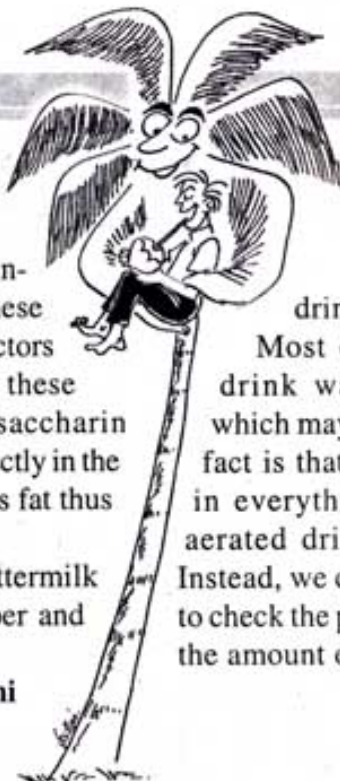
All aerated drinks should be

banned. Apart from containing harmful pesticides, these are zero energy drinks. Doctors advise children to avoid these drinks as they contain saccharin (sugar) which dissolves directly in the blood and gets deposited as fat thus making children obese.

Natural drinks like buttermilk and fresh juices are cheaper and healthier.

- S. Aarthi

Bharatiya Vidya
Bhavan, Trivandrum



Banning of aerated drinks is not the solution.

Most of the people in India drink water without boiling, which may contain pesticides. The fact is that we can find pesticides in everything. Then why should aerated drinks alone be banned? Instead, we can have strict standards to check the purity of these drinks and the amount of pesticide in them.

- S. Anusha, Std. VIII,

K.V. Picket,
Hyderabad

Question for this Month

CRACKERS TO BURST OR NOT TO BURST?



Advance diwali greetings to all our young readers! Have a very happy, sweet - filled diwali! By the time the November issue of Gokulam hits the stands, Diwali would have been celebrated. Bursting of crackers during Diwali has been in practice since time immemorial. But, today, many of us, for reasons more than one, have begun to think otherwise.

What do you think?

Dear children,

Please send in your views for or against the above topic. It should be short and crisp (50 - 60 words only). Each entry published will receive a special remuneration of Rs.25/-. Send in your views quickly, giving all details about yourself.

- Editor

KIDNAPPED

Story and
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MUTHU

6

Look, that's the man
who got us into
trouble!

Get him... and that
jeep...

Meanwhile -

Tarun! What
happened?

Not to worry!
I am here!

Where are
you, Tarun?

What should
we do now?

I guess I'll become visible
again if I drink some water.

Eureka!
That must be
grandpa's new
invention...

And that's why the thugs
have kidnapped him.

Just then -

Hands up!
Don't move!
Or else...



... I'll shoot her. Vicki, check him out
for any weapons.



Invisible Tarun sprang into action...

Oh! Ouch-



Hey! Who's that?
Where from...?



Tvesa was quick to slip out of Bill's
tight grip.



Uncle Akash punched Vikram.



They tied up Bill and Vikram and got ready to leave.

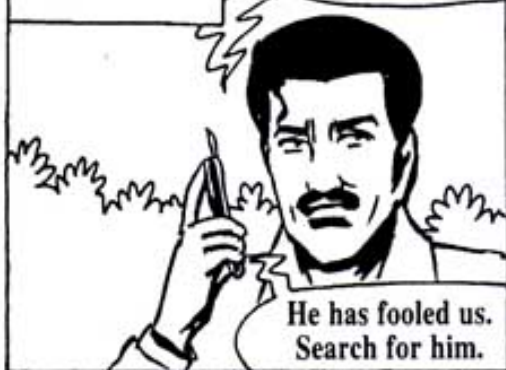


Uncle Akash stopped when Bill's cell phone rang.



Uncle Akash took the phone at once and listened...

Bill, our man who was bringing the old man to me, has not yet turned up.



He has fooled us. Search for him.

Uncle Akash threatened the two villains.



Who is that man? Tell me.

I don't know!

Tarun attacked Bill once again.

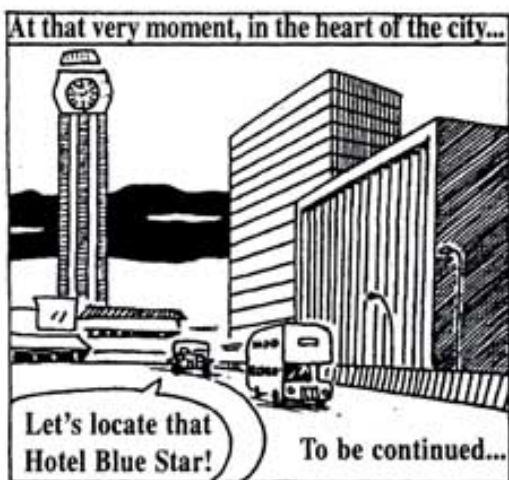
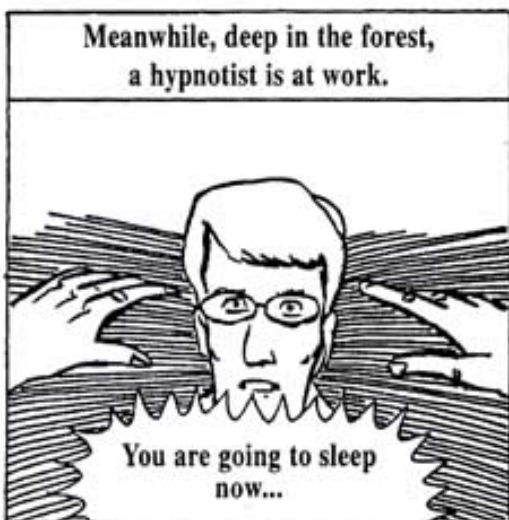
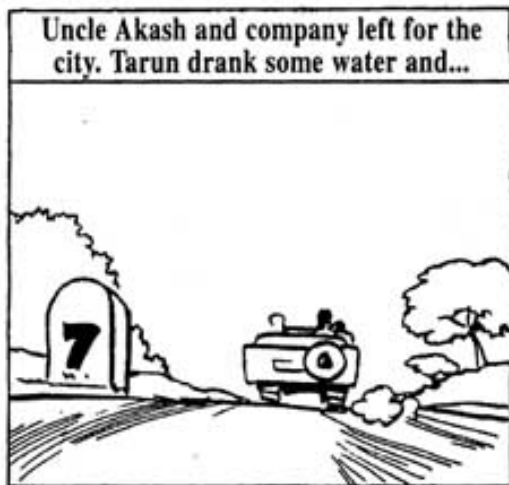
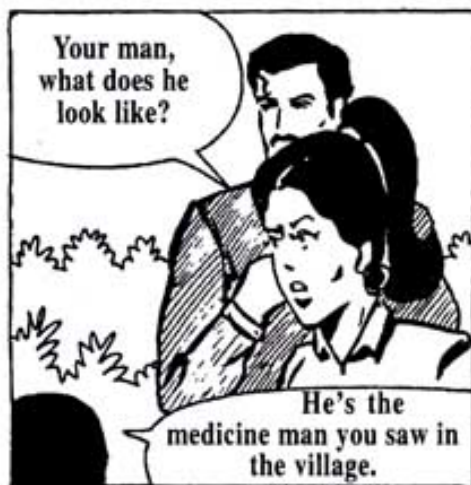


Stop! I'll tell you everything.

In the city... near the clock tower... Blue Star Hotel... Room number 307...



I wonder who's thrashing me... Surprising!



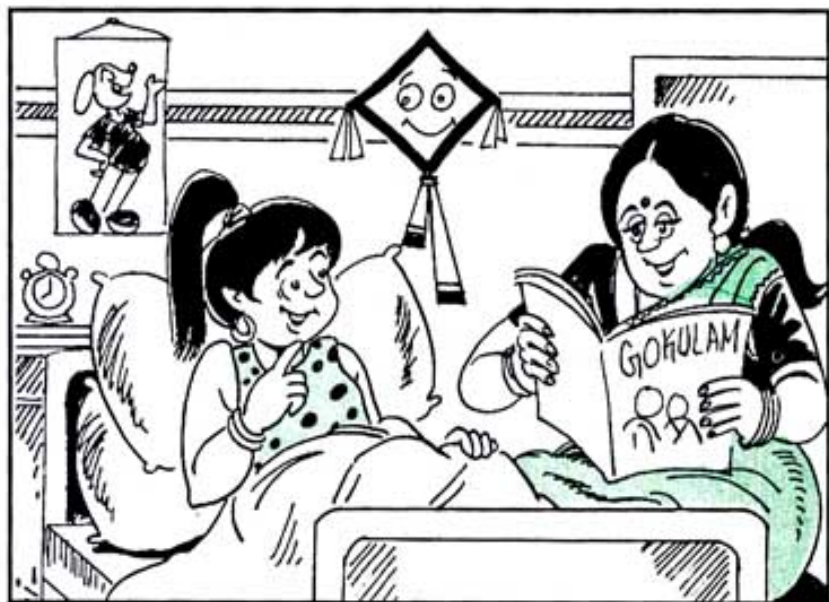


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PREFIXES

Ms. Gayatri had a sheaf of papers in her hand. It was the homework of the class listing the use of English words in Tamil.

"The reason why English words are being freely used in the Tamil language is that all languages have the habit of adopting the better, the easier and the more descriptive word."

"Have other Indian languages also adopted English words, Ms. Gayatri?", asked Harini in a soft voice.

"Why, yes", said Ms. Gayatri.

"I will tell you a story a friend related to me. It happened in Delhi. The friend asked an autorickshaw driver to take her to the 'Hindi *Pusthakalaya*,' the name of a library. After driving all around the place and my friend's patience exhausted, they finally reached the library. The autorickshaw driver turned round and said (in Hindi, of course), "Why didn't you tell me 'library' in the first place?"

He was more familiar with the word library than with the word '*pusthakalaya*'. But let's get down to work."

The class took out their notebooks and pens.

"Today I am going to talk to you about prefixes. Do you know what a prefix is?"

"Isn't it something that comes just before a word?", asked Shibani.

"That's right, Darshini" said Ms. Gayatri.

The whole class laughed in amusement. It was obvious that Ms. Gayatri had not been able to distinguish one twin from the other. Ms. Gayatri smiled realising her mistake but continued with the lesson.

"A prefix is a group of words placed before a word, to alter or to add to its meaning. Most prefixes are



from Latin or Greek. Examples are :-

Intra meaning inside as in intravenous and intraocular

Sub meaning under as in submarine, substandard and sub-editor

Ultra meaning more than, as in ultrasonic and ultraviolet.

"There are prefixes which give a negative meaning to a word. Can you give me examples of words beginning with the prefix, *in*?", asked Ms. Gayatri.

There was a loud and immediate response from the class.

Incapable, indecent, incompetent, inexcusable, indecisive and incorrect!

Ms. Gayatri had to raise her hand to stop the class from shouting too much.

"My mother says that I am incorrigible", said Kanchana.

The class tittered.

"Only sometimes", she added.

Ms. Gayatri continued. "Other negative prefixes are '*mal*' as in malnutrition and malfunction, '*mis*' as in mislaid and misinform, *un*, as in unclear and unfaithful..."

"Unfriendly, ungrateful and undignified", shouted Abhishek, showing off as usual.





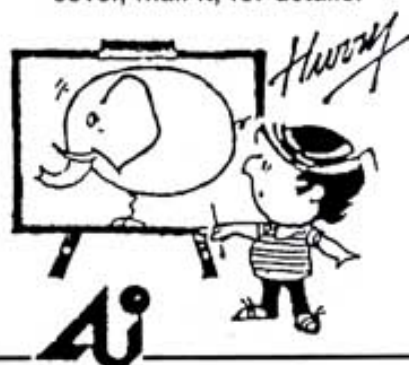
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Ms. Gayatri ignored him. "Another negative prefix is 'anti' as in antibiotic, anticlimax, antiseptic. Does anyone know what the prefix 'ante' mean?", Ms. Gayatri asked, not expecting an answer, but looking pointedly at Abhishek. To her surprise he gave her the correct answer!

He said the suffix *ante* meant before or in front of, like in anteroom and antechamber. Antecede and precede are words that mean the opposite, he said.

Ms. Gayatri noticed that the twins Shibani and Darshini were sharing a joke, so she asked Shibani to give her examples of words with prefixes.

With her dimples becoming deeper and deeper as she smiled, Shibani said, "Sunanda, Sumitra, Susheela, Suhasini."

A titter went round the classroom.

"The prefix *su* means good and it is from Sanskrit," added Shibani.

Just then the bell rang and came to the rescue of Ms. Gayatri!

"Homework in your next class!" Ms. Gayatri's voice echoed as she walked out of class.

**SOME INTERESTING
PREFIXES**

Hyper means excessive

Extra means more than

Contra means opposite

Circum means around, on all sides

Bi means twice

Post means after

Sub means below, under

TICKLE YOUR FUNNY BONE!



Sanjay : What steps would you take if you saw a dog chasing you?

Ajay : Long steps!

- Das Chandrasekaran
Chennai



"Why are you collecting photos of musical instruments?"

"To release a 'music album'!"

- M. Vinodh, Sankarankovil



Patient : Please, doctor! I can't go back to my school. I think I'm a pair of curtains!

Doctor : Just pull yourself together!

- Seetha Rajagopalan,
Std.X, PSBBSSS,
Chennai

Son : Daddy, were you a good batsman?

Daddy : Of course, my son.

Son : You were also a coward then!

Daddy : Why do you say that?

Son : Because a good batsman always hits and runs!

- Roshni C. Lobo,
Std.IX, Stella Maris
High School, Bangalore



Teacher : What do you call a person who keeps talking even when people are no longer interested?

Pupil : A teacher.

- M.P. Pratibha,
Std. XI, J.G.H.V.Mat.
School, Chennai

TWO CONFLICTING DECLARATIONS

"Third degree burns." Dr. Rangarajan had already intimated Ramshekar, our detective friend.

Ramshekar hated to pose questions to this woman who was suffering from severe burns. However he had to help the police inspector.

"Tell me what happened, madam. You need not be afraid of any one", said Ramshekar.

The eyes of Kamakshi rolled around. She could see Dr. Rangarajan and she knew him to be a very efficient doctor. Next her eyes fell on Rajaiyya, her husband. Her eyes hurriedly turned around to focus on the police inspector and at last they rested on Ramshekar.

"Is this an accident? Or an attempt to murder you?"

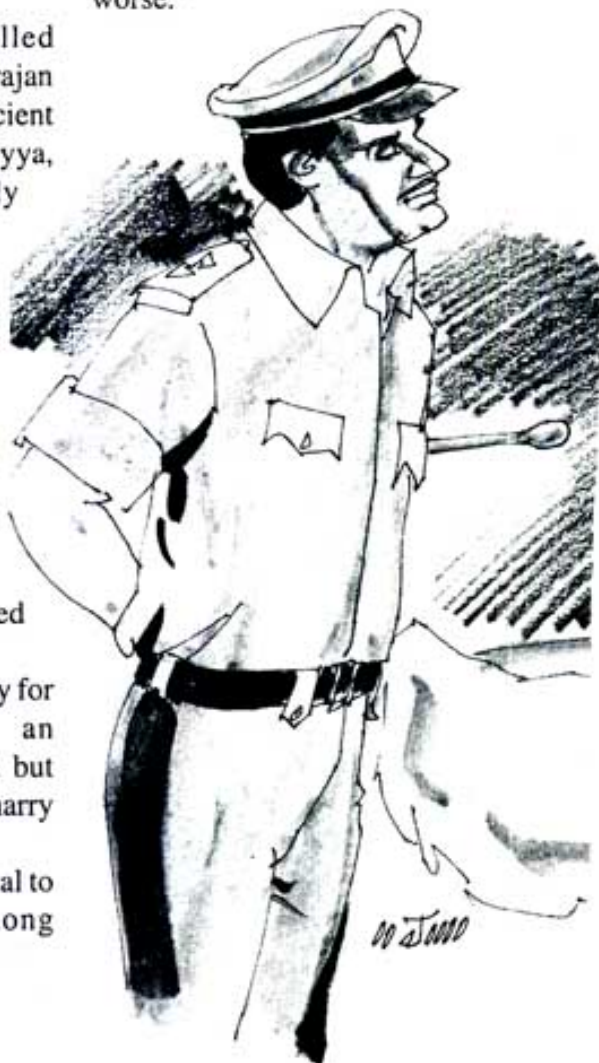
Kamakshi fumbled and uttered a few words. "It is no doubt an accident. I threw away the half - lit matchstick carelessly and it landed on my saree. I realised it only when the fire spread."

The doctor was full of sympathy for the poor woman. She was an uneducated, unemployed orphan but her beauty had made Rajaiyya marry her.

Ramshekar then, left the hospital to make some inquiries among

Kamakshi's neighbours. The inquiries revealed that there were often heated disputes between Rajaiyya and Kamakshi. But this happens in most families, thought Ramshekar. Just then, his cell phone rang.

"Come immediately. Kamakshi's condition has taken a turn for the worse."



Ramshekar could identify the voice of Dr. Rangarajan. He could understand the gravity of the situation too.

He rushed to the hospital. Kamakshi once again looked at the people around her bed, the doctor, a sobbing Rajaiyya, an inquisitive inspector, and the humane Ramshekar.

"This was not an accident. My husband set fire to me."

Within a few minutes she died.

The inspector was startled. "This woman has confused us enough, saying at the beginning, that it was an accident

and later, that her husband had tried to murder her. Shall I discard both her statements?"

"Never do that", roared Ramshekar. It was very clear to him that only one version of Kamakshi's could be accepted. And he knew which one.

Which one and why?

Try to find out, if you cannot, turn to page 57 for the answer.



YUMMY SNACKS!

VEGGIE CUTLET

Ingredients :

Boiled yam - 150 gms.
Boiled raw plantain - ½
Boiled potatoes - 4 nos.
Salt
Chilli powder
Bread slice - 2
Bread crumbs - 1 cup

Method :

Peel the boiled yam, raw plantain and potatoes. Mash them well. Cut the crusts of the bread and dip it in water. Squeeze it and add to the mashed batter. Add salt and chilli powder as per your taste. Add a cup of bread crumbs to the masala batter to make it more crisp. Mix well. Now roll the masala batter

into small balls. Flatten the balls and shallow fry them. Your veggie cutlet goes best with tomato sauce.

- H. Srinandini, Chennai

BREAD TRIANGLES

Ingredients :

5 bread slices
1 cup of sugar
½ cup of water
1 cup of refined oil
2 small cardamoms
Cream, dry fruits, cheese or scraped coconut for decoration

Method :

Take the bread slices and cut each slice diagonally to get triangular pieces of bread. For making syrup, heat water and add sugar to it. When it becomes sticky, remove from fire. Now heat the refined oil in another pan. Deep fry the triangular pieces of bread and put them into the syrup. After two minutes, remove the pieces on a plate. If desired, decorate with dry fruits or cream or cheese or scraped coconut and serve.

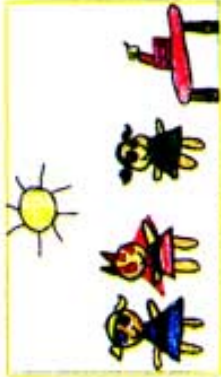
- Kirti Samantray,
Std.IX,
Kendriya Vidyalaya,
Bhubaneswar



ART GALLERY



▲ Jai Kotia, Std. Prep.,
Xavier's Boys Academy, Mumbai.



▲ R. Rohini, Std.I,
P.S.B.B.S.S., Chennai
R. Ambareesh, Std.UKG, New
Prince M.H.S.School, Chennai



K. Poorna, Std.UKG,
Annamalaiyar Mat. School,
Madurai



M. Srivatsan, Std.I,
Union Christian School, Chennai

Syed Yusufuddin, Std.I, Little
Angels School, Raichur,
Karnataka



G.Pranav, Std.UKG, Sri Sankara
Sr. Sec. School, Chennai



R. Ambareesh, Std.I, ▲
Prince M.H.S.S., Chennai

▼ G. Sushil Vasan, Std.III,
D.A.V. S.S.School, Chennai

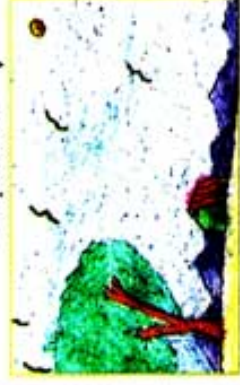


B. Sriniwas, Std.III,
Delhi

Partho Pratim Chatterjee,
Std.III, Delhi Public School,
Ranchi. ▲

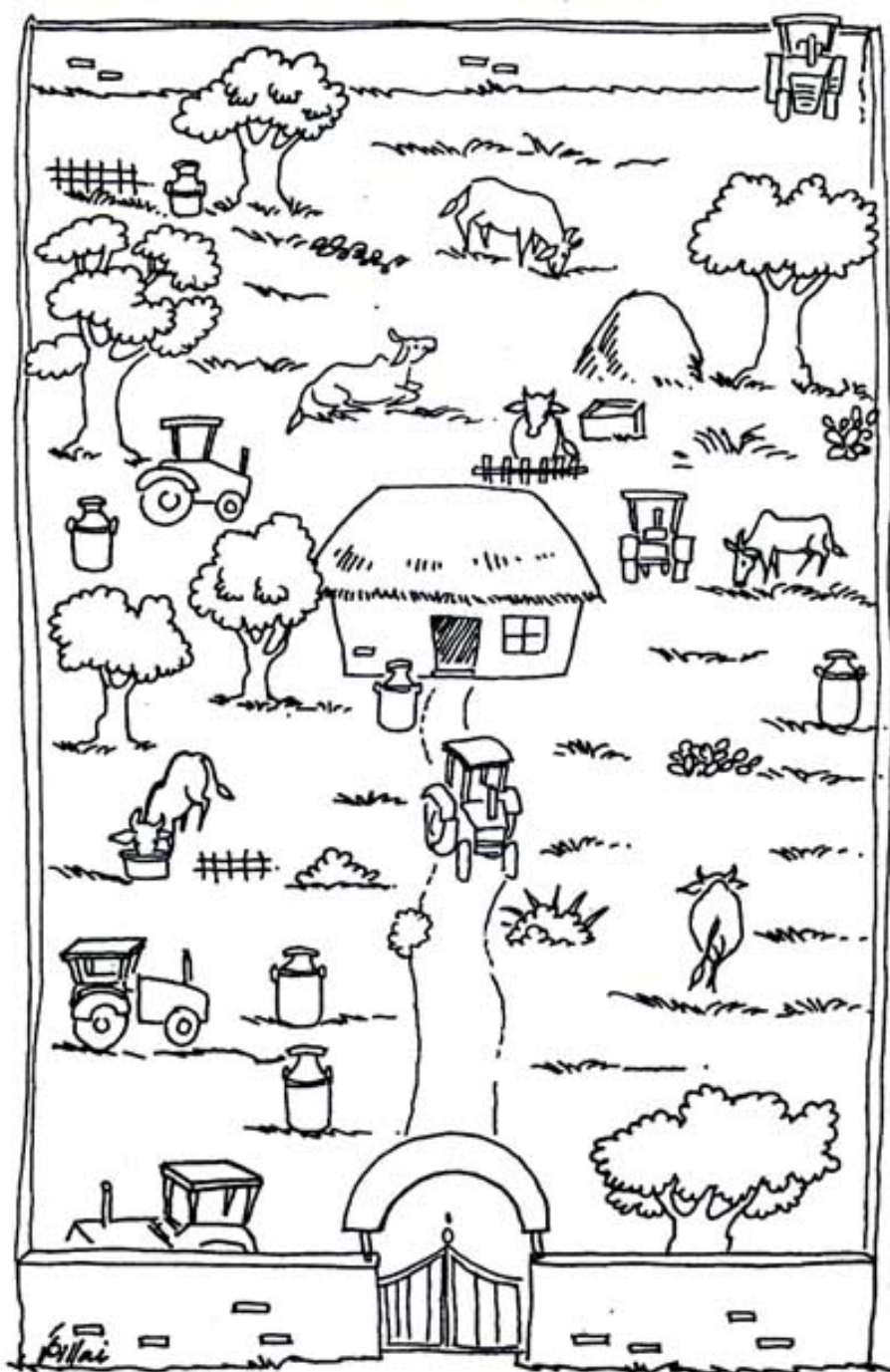


S. Anirudh,
Std.II, Kendriya Vidyalaya-2,
Kalpakkam ▲



BRAIN TEASERS!

1. CAN YOU DIVIDE FARMER HARI'S FIELD INTO SIX SEPARATE SECTIONS SO THAT EACH SECTION CONTAINS A TREE, A COW, A TRACTOR AND A MILK CAN?



- B. Prathibha, Std.VIII,
Indira Priyadarshini Girls High School, Bangalore

2.FIND NAMES OF TEN COUNTRIES IN THIS PUZZLE

P	O	L	A	N	D	O	M	I	N	E
O	O	F	P	E	T	E	O	M	A	N
R	A	C	H	I	N	A	M	D	E	L
T	N	L	P	H	T	X	Y	S	P	N
U	Q	T	K	I	R	A	Q	E	F	O
G	S	O	K	M	T	L	X	I	S	R
A	T	F	B	H	U	T	A	N	Q	W
L	J	F	G	U	L	M	S	D	U	A
K	G	K	O	R	E	A	T	I	W	Y
E	P	O	I	S	S	O	N	A	J	K
T	A	I	R	A	N	N	O	M	U	X

- F.Manal Ibyam, A1 Barakay International School,
Bandarawela, Srilanka

3. Insert the numbers 1 - 9, in the square given,
so that each horizontal, vertical and diagonal line
totals 15.

- A. Mohamed Bilal, Std.IX,
Fatima M.H.S.School, Vriddhachalam

Answers to these puzzles appear on page 55.

COWBOYS

White-skinned, rugged looking men on horses, wearing studded black leather pants, cowskin jackets, long elegant shoes with holsters for their guns and their typical wide-brimmed hats! Men with high values and mor-

ing, lasso in hand, adventurous cowboys of movies and legends! These men have been portrayed so romantically that it is, perhaps, very difficult for us to accept the reality.

The long and healthy lives of these legendary cowboys are only myths replaced by cold, harsh reality. Most of these men were actually poor, underpaid labourers who had never even handled a gun in their lives! They didn't have good education and were mostly illiterate.

Although they did work with horses, most of them did not own any. They merely rode on their employer's horses, herding cattle to distant places in order to sell them. They worked 7 days a week, 18 hours a day and 3 to 4 months at a stretch with very little food or sleep. They usually lodged in the ranch's bunkhouses, which stank of sweat and cow manure.

als, intelligent, well read and extremely knowledgeable! Can you guess who these men are?

Yes, the above descriptions refer to the daring, wild horse taming, gun tot-

Cowboys were often caught in fires, thrown and kicked by horses, charged by cows and killed by pneumonia due to extreme weather conditions.

Most cowboys were Mexican, Red Indians or Black. The few white-skinned were mostly retired soldiers.

Myths and legends, perpetuated by movies and folklore about these cowboys, give a completely different picture indeed!

- **Jananee Muralidharan, Std X, NAFL School, Bangalore.**

ACTIVITY

How about dressing up a little boy to make him look like a cowboy? We have this activity for you on page 40 - 41. Paste the figure of the boy on a thin cardboard and cut it out. Now, paste the various garments and accessories of the cowboy on to another piece of cardboard. Cut them out too. Use these to dress up your very own cowboy!! See if Peter looks as handsome as his twin Jack!



GHOSTS IN THE CHOULTRY

P.V.V. SATYANARAYANA

Amin was a notorious thief. People dreaded him. Such was his notoriety that parents often used his name to frighten their children.

Once Amin committed a big theft in a rich man's house and stole gold jewellery and huge cash. With this rich haul, he started off for his hideout in the forest, on the outskirts of the town.

On the way it suddenly started to rain. Soon there was a heavy downpour followed by gale. Amin was forced to take shelter in an old choultry nearby. It was an abandoned building standing alone in a dilapidated condition. It was pitch dark inside and nothing was visible. The movement of bats could be heard.

As Amin settled down, he had a sudden and strange feeling that he was not alone. So he shouted aloud, "Who is there inside?"

Amin proved to be right. For, a woman's voice responded immediately and asked him who he was.

Twisting his moustache, Amin proudly announced who he was and continued the conversation.

"It is nice to have company in this boring weather", he remarked.

The woman remained silent for a few seconds and then spoke. "As you say that you are the notorious thief Amin, it reminds me of a story. I shall tell you the story to overcome the boredom."

Amin laughed and said, "You seem to be a resourceful lady. Why should I say no to you if you volunteer to engage me with a story?" he said.

The woman cleared her throat and started. "This is in fact a real-life story... There was a girl named Ganga in the village nearby. She used to enjoy stories concerning thieves and dacoits ever since her childhood. Her fascination for them grew with her age. She was so enamoured that when she came of age she wanted to marry a notorious thief, and none else. And which parents would like to give their daughter to an outlaw? Ganga's father chided his daughter and forcibly married her off to a farmer's son.

Once a big theft occurred in the house of Ganga's in-laws. At that time Ganga happened to see the thief and instantly fell in love with him. She was even prepared to



elope with him if he happened to come again and accepted her!"

Amin found the 'story' quite interesting. He was unable to believe that a housewife could fall in love with the man who had committed theft in her own house, and would be willing to run away with him. It sounded quite strange.

Expressing his astonishment, he asked the woman, "It is simply unbelievable! If it is a real-life character as you say, where is Ganga now?"

The woman let out a heavy sigh and said, "Her desire unfulfilled, Ganga died."

"Oh, my!", Amin let out a small cry unconsciously. He felt pity for the unknown girl. He was disappointed too, as he had wanted to meet Ganga.

At that very moment, he heard a cough. Startled, he had asked the woman, "Who is that? It sounds like a man. I thought you were alone. Is there any one with you, lady?"

Even before the woman could reply, the cough was heard again followed by a male voice. "You seem to be interested in the story. I shall narrate the rest of it," he said.

Amin was amused. "Tell me as to how poor Ganga died" he asked eagerly.

"Sure", said the man. "Ganga loved the thief so much that she started chanting his name even in her sleep. And that betrayed her to her husband, Balu. A serious quarrel ensued between the wife and the husband. And in a fit of anger, Balu stabbed Ganga to death. Thereafter, he went to the police and surrendered. The court sent him to the gallows. And he was hanged."

Amin did not know how to react. It was the woman who continued the story now. "Due to the unnatural death, Ganga became a ghost and has been searching for the thief ever since", she said.



"Not only that, even Ganga's husband Balu has become a ghost. He too is in search of the thief" added the man.

Amin was perplexed. "How come...!?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Balu thinks that it was the thief who was responsible for the ruin of his family and their deaths. Ganga too is of the same opinion", explained the man. "So both these ghosts have been making frantic search for the man to avenge their own deaths."

Amin's curiosity knew no bounds. A lot of interest had been generated in him by the story. "Did they find him?" he asked.

"Yes, just now!" said both the male and female voices in a chorus.



Amin was startled. Suddenly it struck him that there was something amiss. Unease creeping over him, he got up abruptly. "Who are you people? How do you know the story? How do you happen to be here... at this hour?" he demanded in a stern voice.

The woman laughed and said that she was Ganga, while the man revealed that he was none other than Ganga's husband, Balu.

An instant shiver surged through Amin's spine. Fear enveloped him.

At that very moment, there was a sharp lightning outside. In that flash of light, Amin

could see two human forms - that of a man and a woman sitting huddled in a corner. He was scared at the sight. His mouth dried up.

"But... you... you people are already dead, I suppose!" he trembled like a dry leaf.

"Yes, ofcourse!" said the woman. "It is a year since we both died. Our unnatural deaths have turned us into ghosts...."

"... Our long search has ended here today", the man picked up from there and continued, "Luckily we could find you here. Our long-standing wish is going to be fulfilled at last."

Amin was so scared that even before the man could conclude, he shot off from there like an arrow, unmindful of the darkness. In his hurry, he left behind all his booty and disappeared in the rain.

The man and the woman had a hearty laugh after realizing what had happened. Had Amin not been so timid, he would have found out the truth... the truth that they were not actually ghosts, but human beings like him. They were returning to their village after visiting their relatives when they had got stranded due to the heavy rain and gale. Clever as they were, they had fabricated the story to create the impression that they were ghosts, to scare the thief away.

The couple collected all the money and the jewels that Amin had left behind and waited till the rain stopped. Thereafter they went to their village safely.

The next day along with the village head, they went to the Police Superintendent and handed over the booty left behind by the thief. The Police Superintendent praised the couple for their courage and their ready wit, and appreciated their honesty in handing over the booty.

THE BRONZE NATARAJA

It was Vijaya-dasami Day. Shweta and Shilpa were getting ready to go to their dance class. It was a very important day for them and both of them were very excited! They were going to pay their respects to their dance teacher or rather their Guru, Anita!

Anita's dance hall was crowded with children and their parents. A lot of new students were also joining that day. The children prostrated before their Guru with reverence and kept their 'salangai' at the feet of the dancing Nataraja who is the God of Dance.

"All the new students sit on my right and the others on my left. Now, only the seniors come in the front," Anita said, calling the children to form groups.

The seniors came and stood in front of her. "Obeisance first and then stand in the Nataraja pose, chil-



dren," Anita told them. The children bowed gracefully and stood in the Nataraja pose.

"You know, children," she said, "this is the pose of Lord Nataraja. How beautifully the bronze statue makers have captured the movement! The hair flying horizontally, the slightly turned smiling face, the waist cloth and the snake horizontally poised! Now when you twirl, your dupatta tied around your waist comes up horizontally and if your hair were loose it would also raise up horizontally! The milky way which is called Akash Ganga in Indian mythology, looks just like Shiva's hair spread out horizontally!"



* Dance class in progress

"Aunty, let me try and see," all the children started clamouring around Anita and started whirling and twisting. Some went near the bronze idol for a closer look.

"Aunty, how are these bronze statues made?" asked a curious Shilpa.

"That is a good question Shilpa!," Anita said. "The way these bronzes are made are very interesting. At the little hamlet of

Swamimalai, about 30 kms. from Thanjavur, live a few families of *sthapatis* or icon makers. Shall we go there to see how these statues are made?" asked Anita. They decided to go to Swamimalai the next weekend.

The children gathered around a sculptor. "Namaskarams, Shanmugam sir," said, Anita, "I have come with my dance students to show them how bronze statues are made and who better than you to tell them all about it!"

"Please come, Madam," said Shanmugam, leading them to a cool shed.

"We first make a wax model of the statue over a clay core," he began. "The wax model is covered with clay and then molten metal is poured into a hole in the clay. The wax melts and comes out from the bottom and the

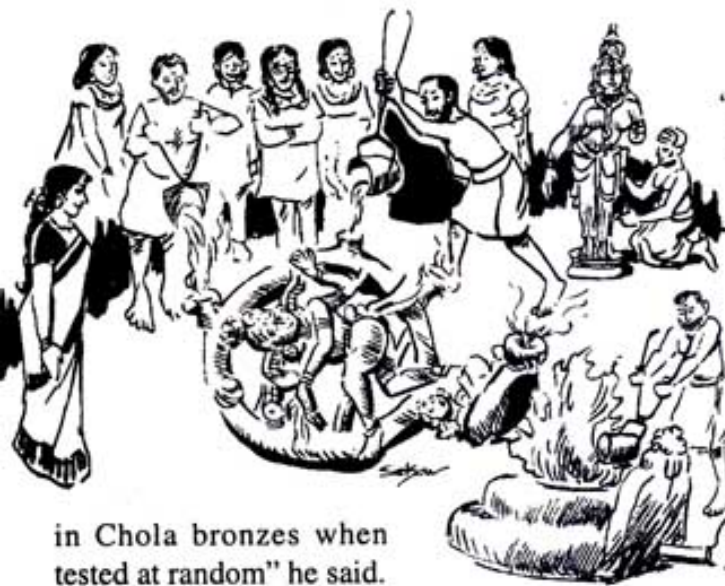


* Sculptors at work

molten metal takes its place. After the whole thing is dry, the clay is broken and finishing touches given to the metal statue."

"Uncle, What about those idols found in temples? How did they make them in those days?" asked Shweta.

"South Indian metal icons are generally referred to as '*pancha-loha*', i.e. icons made of five metals," the sculptor answered, "but Chola and other south Indian images show that most were of bronze (i.e., an admixture of copper and tin) while others were brasses (i.e., an admixture of copper and zinc) with nearly all containing lead in addition. However, traces of gold and silver could be also detected



in Chola bronzes when tested at random" he said.

"This is called the Lost-Wax method of creating Bronze icons," he continued. "We also make solid cast images in the traditional way. Unlike many government promoted workshops which have shifted to the metric scale, we still use palm fronds for marking out the tala system of proportions for icons.

Did you know that the unit of measurement in icon-making is the word

'tala'?" he said, smiling at their astonished looks.

"Oh! Is it so?" asked a surprised Medha. "In dance we refer to 'tala' as one beat."

"And in music also it means one beat," chipped in Sathvika.

"The Indian bronze is so beautiful because we can

see how wonderfully the essence of the artistic forms of vocal and instrumental music, dance and even painting have been captured in them," explained Anita. "All these different disciplines of art are so closely associated that they share similar terminologies too."

The children sat listening to such fascinating information for a long time!

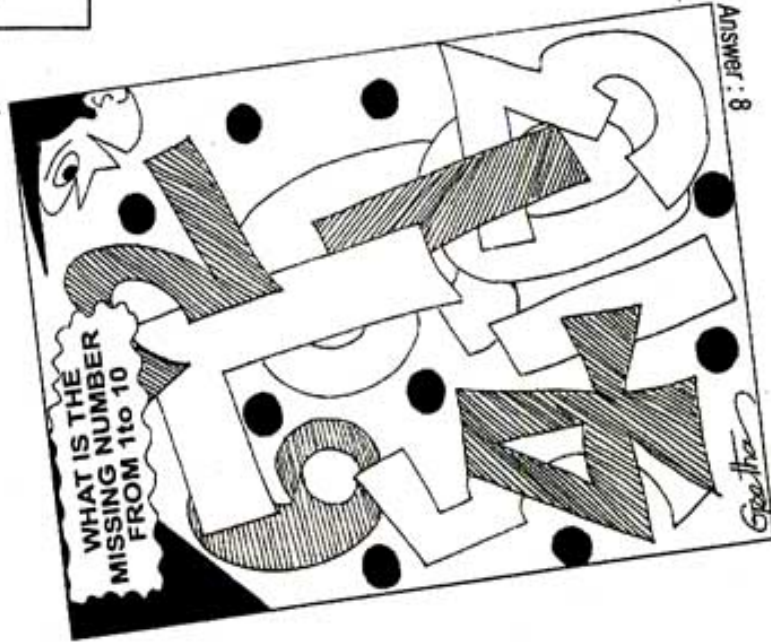
A mythology story to illustrate how knowledge of all the artistic disciplines are important in iconography

There once lived a king called Vajra. He begged sage Markandeya to grant him the skill of iconography. Sage Markandeya asked the king a few questions before handing him the first lump of metal. "Do you know how to paint?" asked the sage of the king. The king did not know painting, but requested that he be taught the art if it was a prerequisite to learning

sculpture. "But for that you need to know how to dance," insisted the sage. To learn dancing, in turn the king was required to have a rudimentary knowledge of instrumental music which needed a foundation in vocal music. So the king had to begin with the octaves to be able to pour his sensibilities into any other material and make a form!

FUN TO DO!

SPOT THE SIX DIFFERENCES



Ans : 1. The ladder 2. Stripes on pant 3. Dots on curtains 4. Jam bottle 5. Laddus in tin 6. Tail of dog.



COLOUR AND
KEEP

MY FIRST

*I recall my first moment in this world,
When I pushed my way out of the sand,
My eyes and ears as eager as a new born child,
Waiting to absorb any knowledge I could.*

*To me the very fact of my birth was mysterious,
A great feat accomplished in time.
I sensed something even as I approached the surface,
Something calling out to me from a place so fine.*

*I was alone and untaught of the ways of survival,
Yet, without any doubt in my mind,
I walked blindly searching to find,
The one thing I was looking for,
The soft, gentle sea.*

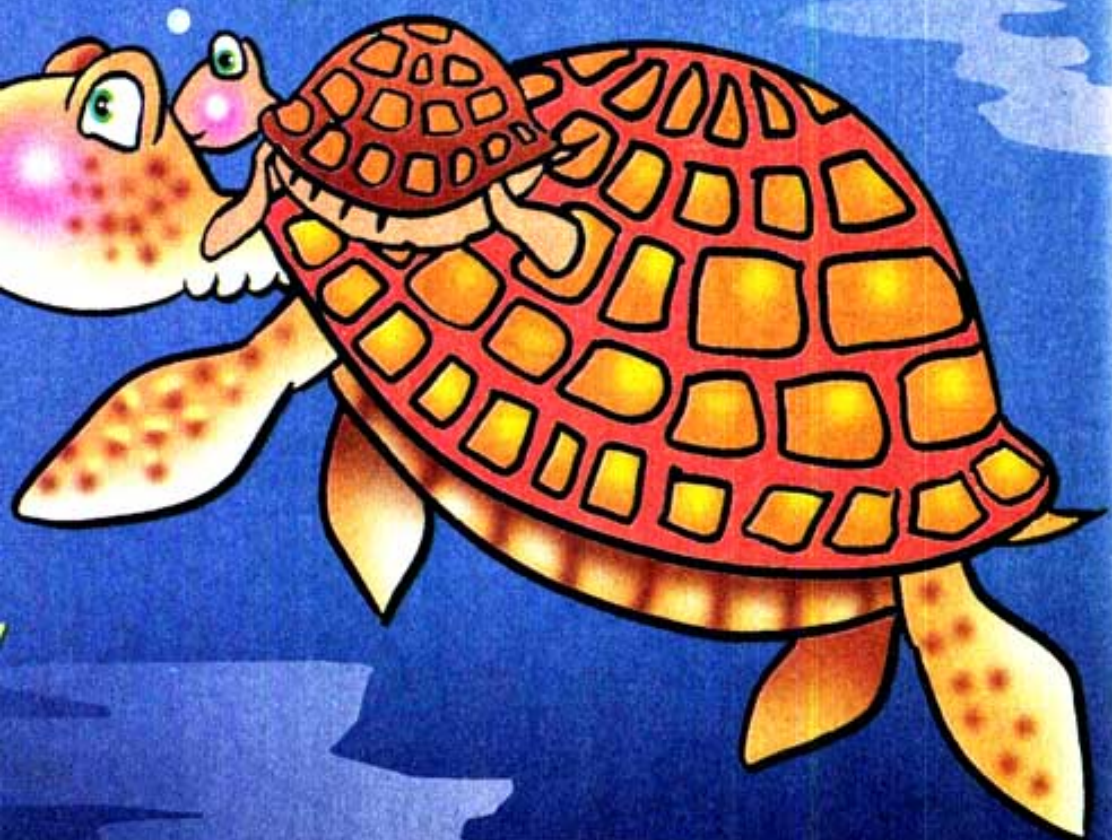
*I started to move, prepared for a long walk
I felt a wonderful presence guiding me to the ocean,
I knew in an instant that I was going the right way.*

*So then I walked, and walked,
Towards the edge of the sand,
Knowing that there, I would find my new home.*

**- Prarthana Vasudevan
Std.VII, Clarksville Middle
School, USA**



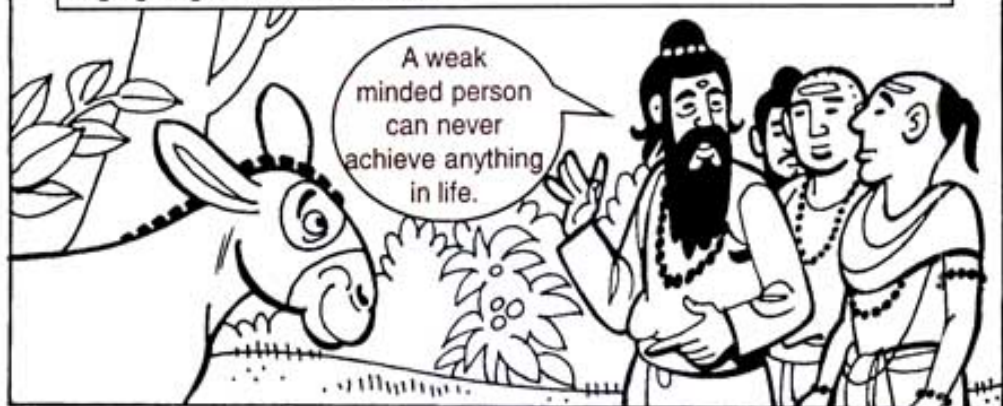
STEPS



THE FOOLISH DONKEY

Story and Illustrations :
venu variath

There once lived a foolish donkey. One day, the donkey came across a sage giving advice to his disciples.



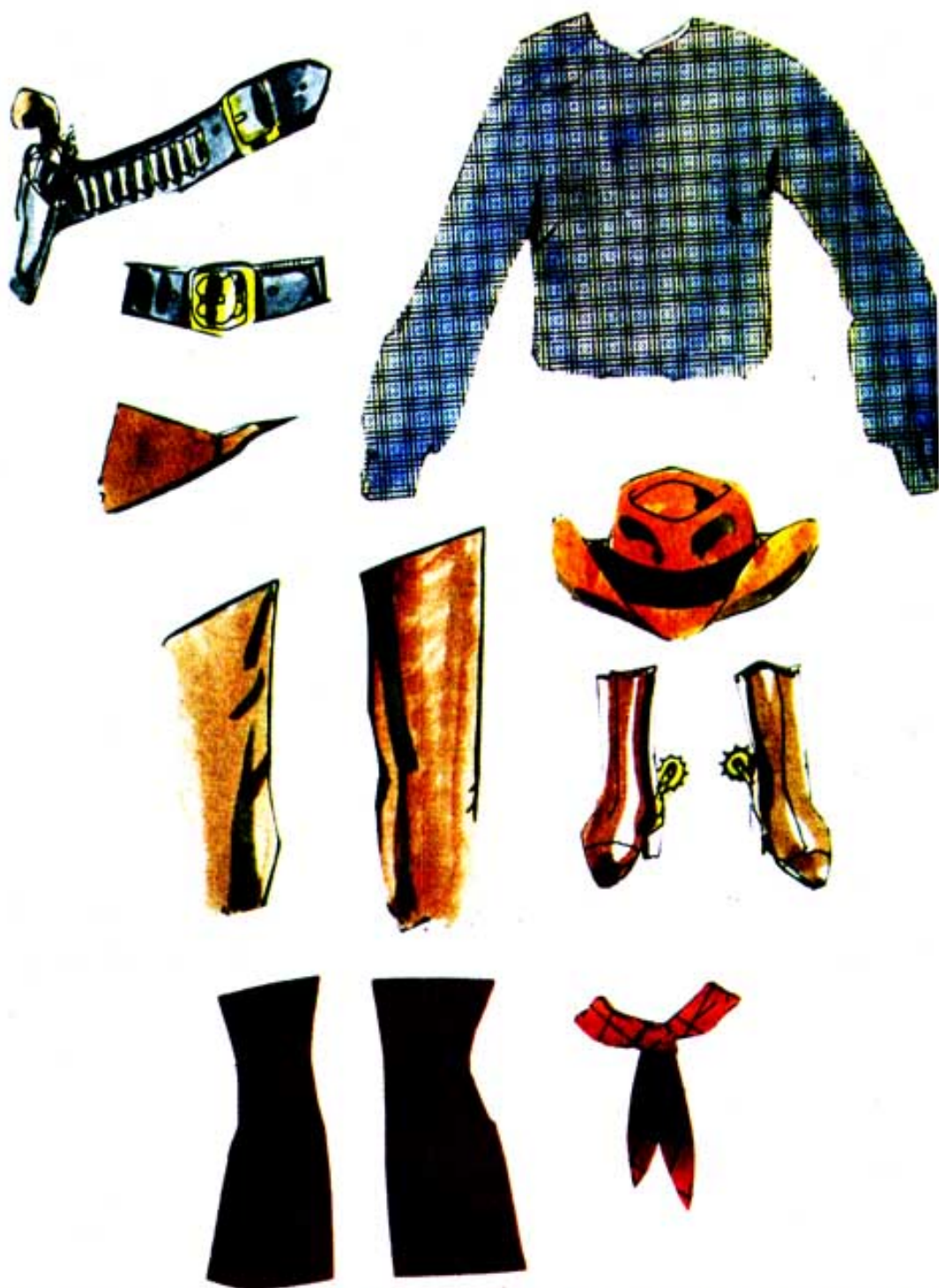
With the sage's words ringing in his ears, the donkey went away. Later...

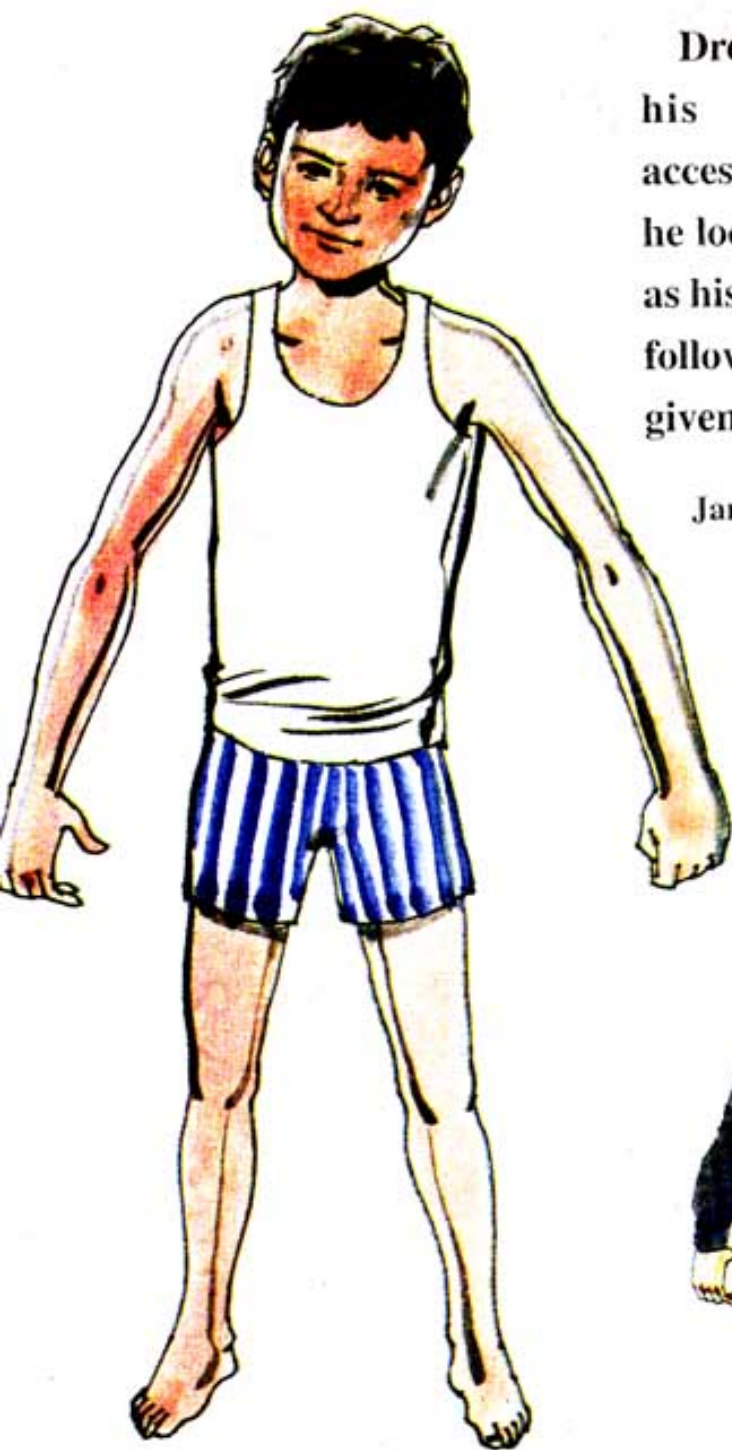


The donkey nursed his wounds, went to
the sage and narrated his woe!



CUT AND PASTE!





Dress up Peter in all his clothes and accessories and see if he looks as handsome as his twin, Jack! Just follow the instructions given on page 28.

Concept :
Jananee Muralidharan
Picture : Jayaraj



GALLANTRY AWARDS OF INDIA

**“In the battle field,
without fear,
without pity,
without remorse”**

The Government of India has instituted three gallantry awards for the officers and men of the Indian Armed Forces for their conspicuous acts of bravery and supreme sacrifices in the battle field, the Param Vir Chakra, the Mahavir Chakra and the Vir Chakra.

The first winner of Independent India's most coveted award of Param Vir Chakra (PVC) was **Major Somnath Sharma** of the 4th BN. Kumaon Regiment. On a cold morning in November 1947, Major Somnath Sharma, holding an important position in the Kashmir valley, was heavily out-numbered by the Pakistani raiders. By his gallant leadership, he inspired his men, who fought with the raiders tenaciously for several hours and averted imminent danger to Srinagar. Unfortunately, Major Sharma fell down to an enemy's bullet while leading his men. A stadium at the training centre of Kumaon regiment, in Ranikhet, U.P., was named after the brave Major Somnath Sharma.



* Major Somnath Sharma

in 'Thithwal' area, on October 13, 1948, Karam Singh repulsed enemy attacks with outstanding courage. Due to heavy pressure from the enemy, Karam was forced to evacuate his outpost.

Karam and his comrades were wounded. Nevertheless, he performed a remarkable feat of bravery. In spite of heavy shelling, he

The soldiers of the Sikh regiment are also known for their valour and courage and have scaled the heights of glory. A Sikh soldier, Lance Naik Karam Singh, was honoured with the Param Vir Chakra, for his courage and bravery in the Jammu and Kashmir operation in 1948. While commanding an outpost



* Lance Naik Karam Singh

managed to effect the withdrawal and also moved the wounded from the trench. He engaged the enemy in a hand - to - hand, grenade fight. Although wounded and exhausted, Karam Singh regrouped his men and launched a scathing attack on the enemy. When he saw that two enemy

soliders were approaching his trench, he fired on them. But the enemy soldiers were out of firing range. Karam Singh jumped on them and killed them with his bayonet, and returned to his post! Lance Naik Karam Singh upheld the noble tradition of the Sikh soldiers.

THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA (PVC)

This is the highest decoration for valour awarded for the most conspicuous, daring, pre-eminent act of self-sacrifice, in the presence of the enemy, in land, sea or air.

It is made of bronze and is circular in shape. The obverse or the front part of the medal has four replicas of 'Indra's Vajra', embossed around the state emblem in the centre. On the reverse, the words 'Param Vir Chakra' are embossed both in Hindi and in English, with a lotus in the middle.

The decoration is worn on the left breast with a plain, purple coloured ribbon.

THE MAHAVIR CHAKRA (MC)

This is the second highest decoration awarded for an act of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy, on land, air or at sea.

It is made of standard silver, and is cir-

cular in shape. The obverse has a five pointed star with a domed centrepiece, bearing the gilded state emblem in a circle in the centre. On the reverse, the words 'Mahavir Chakra' are embossed both in Hindi and in English.

The decoration is worn on the left breast, with a half-white and half-saffron ribbon, with the saffron nearer to the left shoulder.

THE VIR CHAKRA (VC)

This is the third in the order of awards, and is awarded for an act of gallantry, in the presence of the enemy.

The decoration is made of standard silver and is circular in shape. The obverse has

a five pointed star which has an Ashoka Chakra at its centre. Within this chakra, there is a domed centrepiece bearing the gilded state emblem. On the reverse, the words 'Vir Chakra' are embossed in Hindi and in English, with two lotus flowers in the middle.



* Param Vir
Chakra (PVC)

FOR WANT OF A MOUSTACHE!

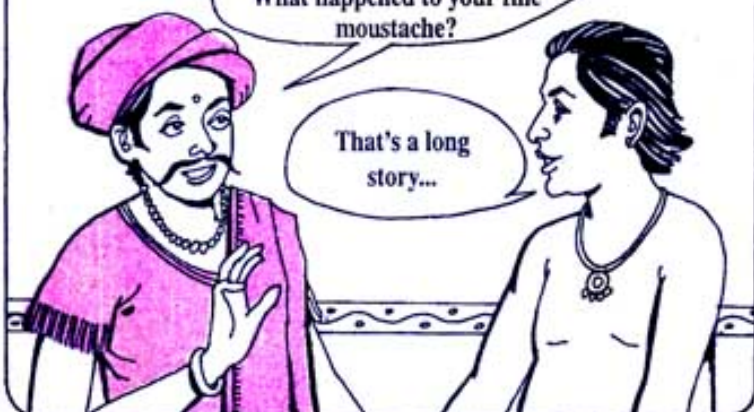


Story and
Illustration: AAZHI

Ramaswamy had come over from his village to visit his friend Kuppusamy.

Hello! Kuppusamy!
What happened to your fine
moustache?

That's a long
story...



Kuppusamy began his story... King Kirti Varma didn't have a moustache. The Queen was upset. One day...

Oh! King, all the ministers,
divans, servants, soldiers, everyone has a
moustache. When I think of you
without one, I feel extremely
embarrassed...



After a few days of intense thought, the king took a decision.

Hear! Hear! The king hereby
announces a grand reward for
anyone who can make the king's
moustache grow!



A physician came along -

Oh! King! Apply this herbal oil
regularly for 48 days. You will get a
black and bushy moustache.

I shall try it. But I cannot
reward you until I see the
results for myself. Until
then you will be under
guard.



The queen was very eager that the king should quickly grow a moustache, therefore, whenever the king was asleep, she generously applied the herbal oil on him!



The king started sprouting a moustache, which grew and grew....



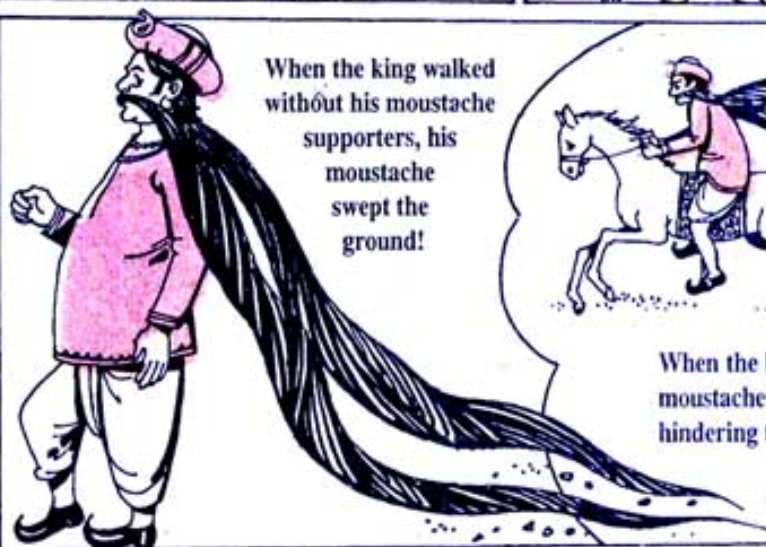
The result was that four people had to support his moustache all the time!



When the king got angry and his moustache shook, it was a scary sight indeed!



When the king walked without his moustache supporters, his moustache swept the ground!



When the king rode a horse, the moustache flared out behind him, hindering the regular traffic!



The barber was kept busy chopping off the king's moustache day after day!



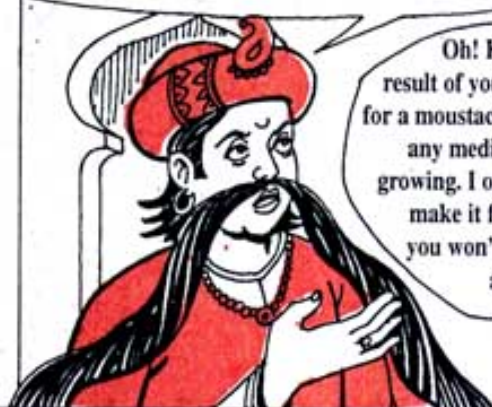
The king got fed up and one day...

Minister! I don't want a moustache so long. Its a lot of trouble. Call for that same physician.



Sir! I don't want to have such a long moustache. Can't you stop its growth?

Oh! King! This is the result of your excessive eagerness for a moustache to grow. I don't have any medicine to stop it from growing. I only have a medicine to make it fall off entirely. But you won't have a moustache any longer.



The king agreed to the physician's suggestion, as he couldn't bear having the long moustache any more!

Thank God! What a relief!



The queen once again started worrying.

But, King, everyone in our country, right from a beggar, has a moustache. I feel very bad about it.



There is only one solution to this problem. Let all men use the same oil, so that their moustaches too fall off!

Minister! Bring that physician at once.

The minister came back with a shocking news -

Oh! King! The physician has escaped and fled to another country.

The king was confused. Then...

Never mind! Call all the barbers and ask them to shave off all the men's moustaches. If anyone grows one, he will be punished severely.

... Me too!

Kuppusamy completed the story.

The barbers are earning a lot of money. Even the beggars are begging with a clean shaven face! I too am in the same boat!

So; Ramasamy, you have come with a moustache. If anybody sees you, you will be in danger. You must go home soon!

Let me leave right away. But remember, if you come to where I live, come with a fake moustache, for there is punishment for being without a moustache in our country!

Kuppusamy now knew what exactly to do.

Fake moustache! Hey! That's a good idea! The king's problem will be solved. So will ours. I will get the prize money too!

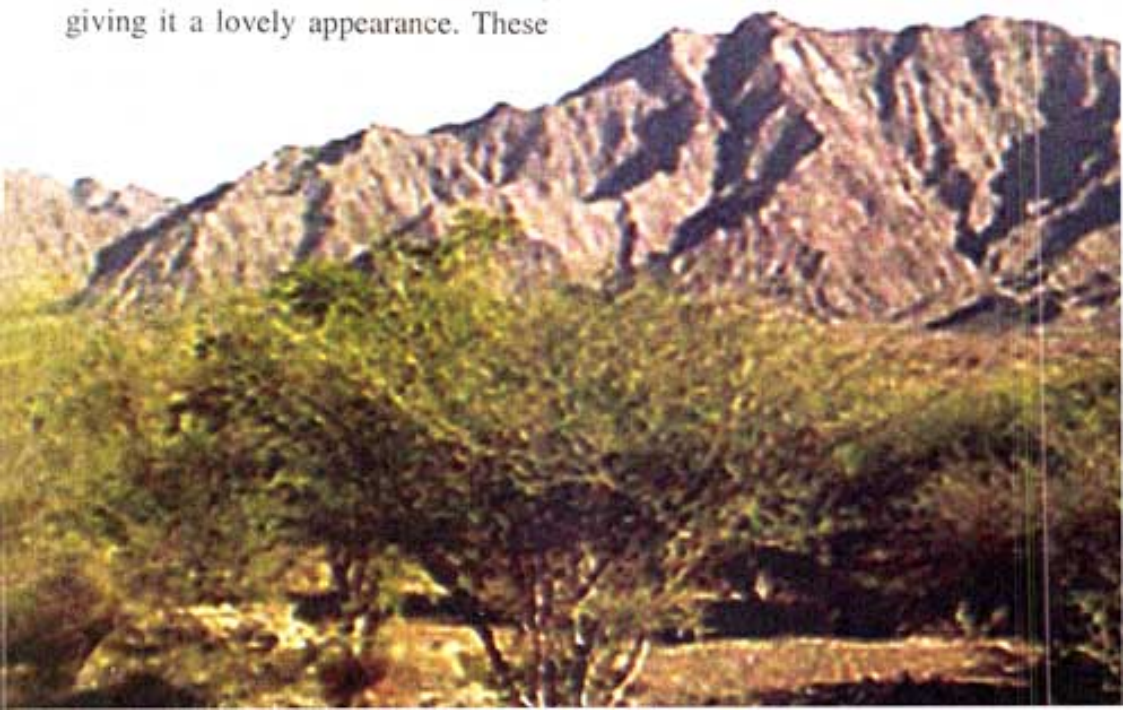
A KERALA IN THE GULF!

Salalah, in the Sultanate of Oman, is a captivating place. It can be compared to our own Kerala, called heaven on earth! Salalah too has abundant coconut groves and plantain farms. It is the only place in the Gulf region with the serene beauty of a hill station!

The *Khareef* or the monsoon season begins from the first week of July and goes on till September. There is a light drizzle throughout the day. During this season, the mountains are fully covered with greenery and surrounded by mist. The usually rocky terrain turns into a green paradise! Wild flowers of different colours cover the mountains, giving it a lovely appearance. These

mountains known as 'Jabals', attract tourists from far and near. People camp at the foothills of these mountains.

Salalah is also well known for its captivating and charming beaches. Some of the well known beaches are Mirbat and Al Mukhsail. The land is cradled by the waves of the Arabian Sea on all the sides. On one particular side of the beach, a blow hole is formed in a small rocky hillock. During high tide, the water gushes out from this blow hole like a fountain, making a whistling noise! It sounds like a musical fountain.



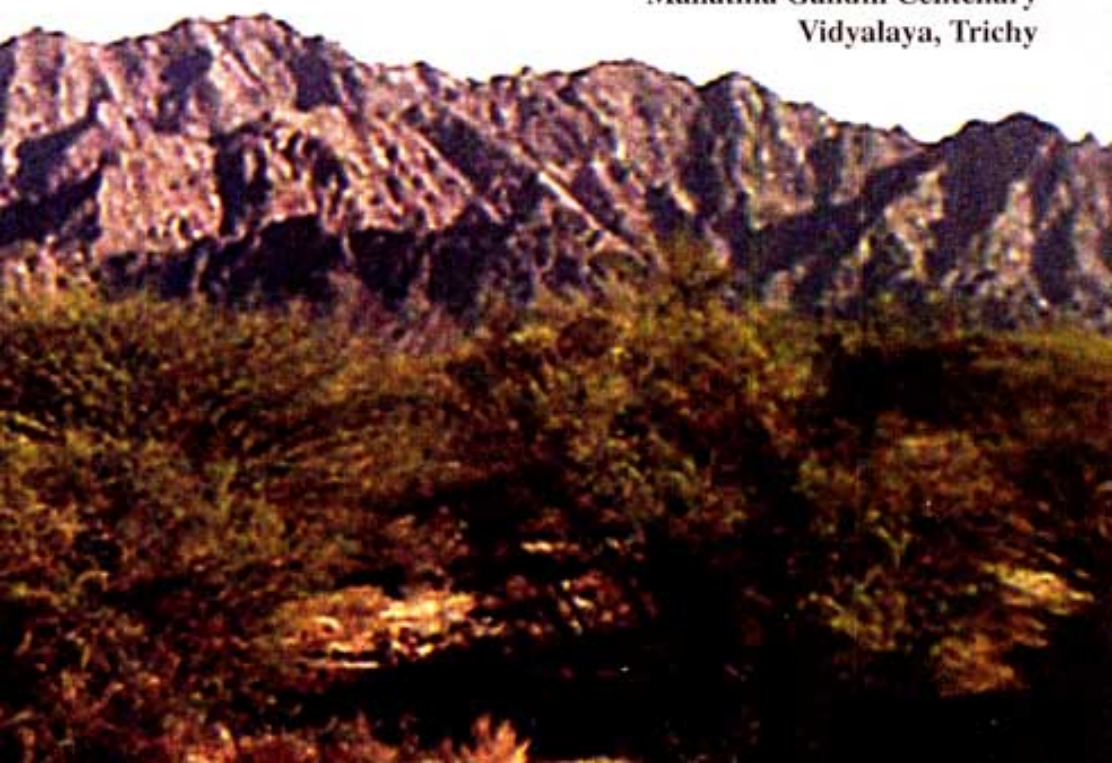
If lucky, we can see dolphins frolicking in the sea. There are also a variety of crabs scurrying about on the sand, leaving a pretty trail behind them! Diving and snorkeling are favourite pastimes for the tourists. The ancient ruins of a palace believed to be that of the legendary Queen Sheeba, is also an added attraction.



Let me tell you an amazing and astonishing fact about Salalah! It has a particular point wherein an anti-gravitational force is at work! At this point, when somebody in a four wheel vehicle or two wheeler stops, they will feel their vehicle being pulled along on its own, even after their vehicle engine is switched off! The movements of the

vehicle can be felt, both in the forward as well as in the reverse direction. Isn't it amazing! People come from afar to experience this mysterious phenomenon. It is obviously due to some magnetic pull but the how and why is not yet known!

- S. Mrinalini,
Std. IX,
Mahatma Gandhi Centenary
Vidyalaya, Trichy



THE BOON THAT BOOMERANGED!

The next in the series of prize winning mythology stories is the story of Bhasmasura written by S. Deepika, from Chennai. Congratulations! Deepika, you have won the prize amount of Rs.50/- this month.

Once there lived an asura named Bhasmasura. His great desire was to become the supreme ruler of the entire universe, overpowering all the gods and goddesses. To achieve this, he began to perform a severe penance in a forest and invoked the grace of Lord Shiva. His austerities were so severe that Lord Shiva

was moved and he appeared before Bhasmasura.

When Lord Shiva asked what he wished for, Bhasmasura said, "Oh Lord! Please grant me the boon that on whosoever's head I place my right hand they will turn into ashes." No sooner had the lord granted his boon, than Bhasmasura laughed menacingly and came running towards the Lord himself, with his right hand



raised. Understanding Bhasmasura's intention, the Lord ran to save his own life!

Lord Shiva hid amidst a thick cover of trees in the forest. While Bhasmasura frantically searched for him, the devas who were watching prayed to Lord Vishnu to save Lord Shiva.



Lord Vishnu, took the form of a beautiful maiden, Mohini. He walked towards Bhasmasura, who stood simply stunned. Sporting a most beautiful smile, Mohini walked past him gracefully. Bhasmasura stopped his search for Lord Shiva and followed Mohini instead!

Ensuring that they were far from the forest, Mohini stopped. Bhasmasura too stopped and they stood facing each other. Lord Shiva now free from danger, watched the happenings with interest and amusement from behind the trees.

Bhasmasura spoke to Mohini, "Oh, beautiful maiden, I am deeply taken in by your beauty. I will be immensely pleased if you agree to become my wife!"

Mohini smiled and replied, "If you wish to have my hand in marriage, you will have to dance the same steps which I perform."

Quite amused by this seemingly simple condition Bhasmasura agreed. Mohini then began to perform many graceful movements and each step seemed easier than the previous one. Bhasmasura performed all the movements with ease. The joyous thought of winning Mohini's hand was foremost in his mind.

Mohini noticed that Bhasmasura was enchanted with her beauty and had stopped thinking about anything else. Seizing the opportunity, Lord Vishnu who was in the guise of Mohini, nonchalantly placed his right hand on his own head. Bhasmasura, too placed his right hand on his head. He at once crumpled into a heap of ashes! Bhasmasura's life thus ended by his own hands.

**- S. Deepika, Std XII,
St. Michael's Academy,
Chennai**

FORMULA-1 QUIZOMANIA



Last year, the only word on every Formula One follower's lips was 'Schumi' (Schumacher). Now their vocabulary has expanded to include 'JPM' (Juan Pablo Montoya) and 'the Flying Finn' (Kimi Raikkonen), who stand at first, second and third place respectively on the Formula One Drivers' Championship table. Yes, it has been a brilliant 2003 season. As the season draws to a close, it's anybody's guess who will end up with the Formula One World Championship trophy.

Test your skills, and take our quiz... If you get them all correct, you're a confirmed Formula One fanatic!

1. Who was the driver who crashed and died in Imola 1994 during the Grand Prix?

2. In what team did Michael Schumacher win his first World Championship?

- a) Ferrari
- b) Williams

c) McLaren

d) Benetton

3. Mika Hakkinen won the World Championship twice during the 1990s. What were the years?

- a) 1997 and 1998
- b) 1997 and 1999
- c) 1996 and 1999
- d) 1998 and 1999

4. Which of these drivers had the most pole positions in the F1 at the start of the 2002 season?

- a) Jim Clark
- b) Ayrton Senna
- c) Alain Prost
- d) Nigel Mansell

5. Which of these four drivers has the most career wins?

- a) Michael Schumacher
- b) Nigel Mansell
- c) Ayrton Senna
- d) Niki Lauda



* Michael Schumacher



ABHINAV RAMNARAYAN



- b) Zolder, Belgium
- c) Monza, Italy
- d) Montreal, Canada

10. In 1999, there were three drivers in the F1 Grand Prix. Ferrari won the Constructors' Cham-

6. When he finished with 123 points, he broke the record of 108 points set by Nigel Mansell. Who is he?

- a) Jacques Villeneuve
- b) Ayrton Senna
- c) Michael Schumacher
- d) Mika Hakkinen

7. Which of these has won the most F1 championships?

- a) Juan Manuel Fangio
- b) Ayrton Senna
- c) Jack Brabham
- d) Alain Prost

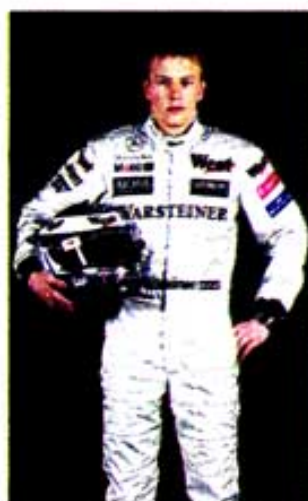
8. In what country is the track called Spa-Francorchamps?

9. Jacques Villeneuve has been driving in the Formula One for quite some time now. His father Gilles Villeneuve was also a Formula One driver.

He drove six seasons before the tragic accident that ended his life. Where did the accident occur?

- a) Watkins Glen, USA

* Kimi Raikkonen



* Juan Pablo Montoya

pionship, and all three of them got their name to the Championship trophy. Which of the following drivers (all of them have driven for Ferrari in the recent past) WASN'T part of that trio?

- a) Michael Schumacher
- b) Eddie Irvine
- c) Mika Salo
- d) Rubens Barrichello

Ans : 1. Ayrton Senna 2. Benetton 3. 1998 and 1999 4. Ayrton Senna 5. Michael Schumacher 6. Michael Schumacher 7. Juan Manuel Fangio 8. Belgium, 9. Zolder, Belgium 10. Rubens Barrichello



A (DE)SERVING PROFESSION!

People often tend to think that it is only those who do not get into medical colleges, settle for becoming nurses. In reality, nursing as a profession, is a highly important and noble one. It **IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT** the second best choice for those who wish to become doctors.

In a hospital, right from the general ward to the operation theatre, nursing is the most important component of patient care. When we think of nurses, we recollect recording temperature,

administering medicine and dressing wounds as activities they perform. This, however, is only one aspect and not the total picture.

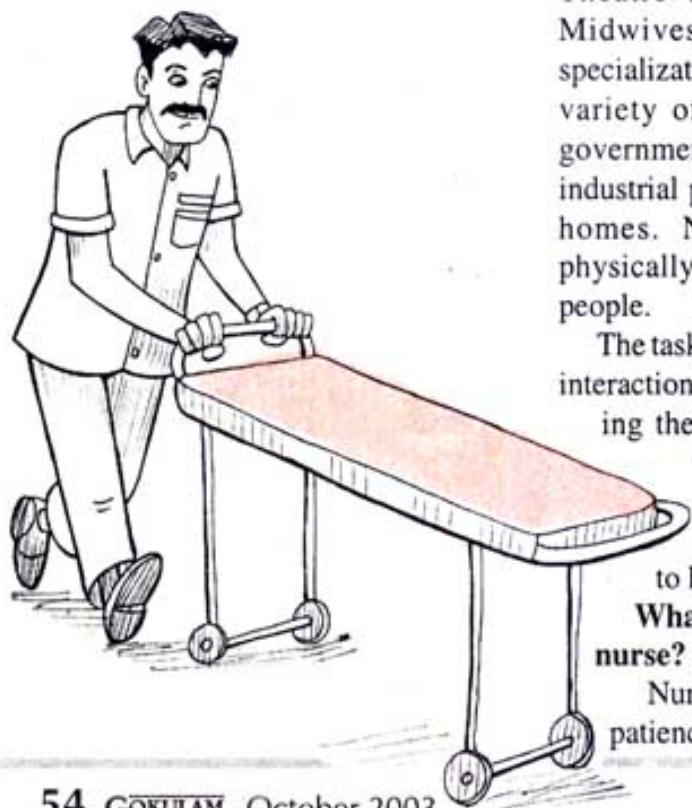
What does the job of a nurse involve?

Nursing covers a range of jobs differing in responsibilities depending on the qualification and work environment. There are many specialized fields in the nursing profession. Hospital Nurses, Industrial Nurses, Psychiatric Nurses, Operation Theatre nurses, School Nurses, Midwives, etc., are a few of the specializations. A nurse can work in a variety of settings, ranging from government hospitals, rural clinics, industrial premises to private nursing homes. Nurses also work with physically and mentally challenged people.

The task requires patience, constant interaction with patients, understanding them and helping them cope with their conditions, working in co-ordination with psychologists and doctors to help their patients recover.

What does it take to become a nurse?

Nursing as a profession requires patience, dedication, care and con-

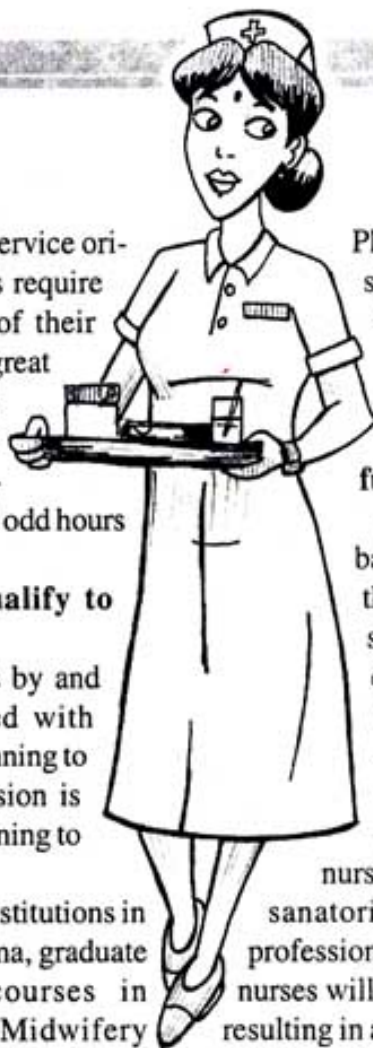


cern for the sick and a service oriented approach. Nurses require extensive knowledge of their domain and shoulder a great responsibility. The work can be stressful and exhausting particularly due to the long and odd hours of work.

How does one qualify to become a nurse?

Though nursing has by and large, been associated with women, things are beginning to change. As the profession is growing, men are beginning to find a foothold.

A large number of institutions in India today offer diploma, graduate and postgraduate courses in Nursing, as well as Midwifery courses. The basic eligibility to pursue a B.Sc course in nursing or the General Nursing and midwifery (GNM) course is a 10+2 with Biology,



Physics and Chemistry. To specialize, you can either do a Master's degree or a Post Diploma course in the area of your choice.

Foretelling the future

A gaze into the crystal ball would tell us that with the advancement in medical science, there has been a constant improvement in the nursing education standards. Gradually as the number as well as the standards of hospitals, nursing homes, private clinics, sanatoriums etc. get upgraded, professionally trained and qualified nurses will be very much in demand, resulting in ample opportunities in this profession.

Next month : Fashion Designing

Feed back to

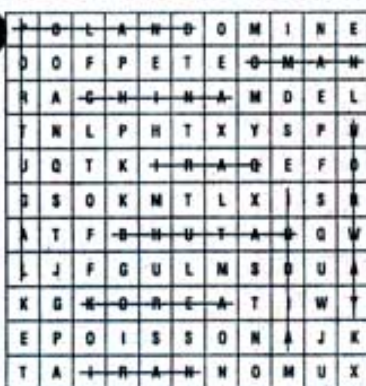
gokulam@careersindia.com

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES GIVEN ON PAGES 26 & 27

1



2

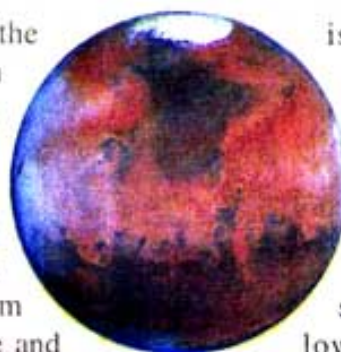


3

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

CLOSE ENCOUNTER!

We all know about the unique celestial event in which Mars came closest to the earth on August 27th, at 3.21 p.m. IST. We talked to the Executive Director, Mr. Iyan Perumal, Birla Planetarium of the Tamilnadu Science and Technology centre.



* Mars Planet

How was it possible to see Mars with the naked eye?

The earth and the planets revolve around the sun. When a planet moves to a point 180°c, away from the sun, i.e., at the diametrically opposite side of the sun when viewed from the earth, the planet is said to be at opposition. The planet Mars, has been in a favourable opposition for the last one month, brightening visibly and was the closest to the Earth on August 27th at 3.21 pm IST. The distance at that point of time between the Earth and Mars was 5.5 crore kms.

How is the surface of the planet?

The surface is full of mountains and craters. The grandest canyon of the solar system known as Vallis Marinaris has been viewed. It has a mountain called Oklympus Mons, three times higher than Mt. Everest.

There seems to be a polar ice cap on Mars. What is it made of?

The Polar ice cap is made of frozen carbon-di-oxide. As that side of Mars

is facing the sun, the carbon-di-oxide is getting evaporated.

Then, is there chance of water on the planet?

No, for one, the atmospheric pressure is very low. It is only 1/50th of Earth's atmosphere. The temperature ranges from -122°C to 25°C.

Has any spaceship landed on Mars?

Ofcourse, Viking and Mars Path Finder from the US have landed on Mars and sent back photographs.

Why are we not able to see other planets?

Mars is currently the only planet visible to the naked eye because it is in the direction opposite to the sun. All other planets including the brightest, Venus, are rather close to the sun, thus invisible to the naked eye.

When will such a celestial event occur next?

The planet Mars would not get closer than this to earth until the year 2287, when it would be 70,000 km closer.



* The surface of the planet Mars

SHOW YOUR WITS!

CLUES:

Across:

1. Make '_____ ' while the sun shines (3)
2. End (6)
3. Appropriate (3)
4. Harry Potter has this on his forehead (4)
5. To dash off, run away (4)
6. Enemy (3)
7. A fight (6)
8. Don't count this before it is hatched (3)



Down:

2. A particular view of a problem (6)
3. This is used in most board games (4)
4. We can't see it but we can feel it (3)
5. Modest (3)
8. To own or to be owned (6)
11. Fright (4)
12. This is found in abundance in the poles (3)
13. A flightless African bird (3)

- S. Aarti, Std. VII,
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,
Trivandrum

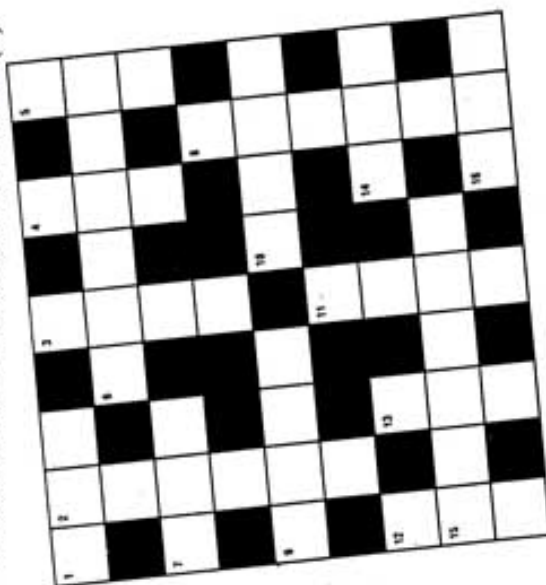
ANSWERS : Across : 1. Hay 6. Finish 7. Apt 9. Scar 10. Flee 14. Fox 15. Combat
16. Egg Down : 2. Aspect 3. Dice 4. Air 5. Shy 8. Belong 11. Fear 12. Ice 13. Emu

CASE FILE - 4

TWO CONFLICTING DECLARATIONS

LOGIC BEHIND THE CASE ON PAGE 22

Kamakshi was an unemployed orphan. When she made her first declaration, she was unsure about her condition. If she said something against her husband and she survived, she may not have anybody to support her for the rest of her life. Hence, in that state she did not want to earn the wrath of her husband. But when she made her second declaration, she was sure that her end was nearing. Hence she spoke the truth and Ramshekar knew this.



REACH OUT

Name : Oruganti Vishnu Vardhan

Age : 14

Address : H.No.1038/G, RGS, Gadag Road, Hubli - 580 020. Karnataka.

Hobbies : Reading Gokulam, playing cricket and volleyball, collecting stamps and coins and playing computer games.

Name : Ramu Bhadran

Age : 13

Address : OB-1/105 ONGC Qtrs. Poonam Nagar, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 093.

Hobbies : Listening to music, playing cricket and badminton, cycling, drawing, gardening and making friends.

Name : Aparna Nambiar

Age : 11

Address : Ground Floor, Sankalp Sapphire Apartments, 5th Main, Vontikoppal, Mysore, Karnataka.

Hobbies : Gardening, cooking, drawing and reading murder mystery stories.

Name : S. Jagabar Ali

Age : 17

Address : 16, Malumiar Street, Nagore - 611 002. Nagai Dist.

Hobbies : Reading books, watching T.V. news, playing chess and football and making friends.

Name : Vignesh

Age : 16

Address : 19/6, Sunder Nagar Main St., Thirunagar, Madurai - 625 006.

Hobbies : Browsing the internet, watching T.V., playing cricket, reading, driving and collecting coins and toys.

Name : P.R. Athira

Age : 13

Address : 'Kshama', 5/440(5), Priyadarsini Nagar, Puthur, Palakkad - 678 001.

Hobbies : Reading, writing, singing, dancing, listening to music, chatting with friends.

Name : Ninad David Kamble

Age : 15

Address : 34/3, Indian Airlines Staff Colony, Kalina, Santacruz (E), Mumbai - 400 029.

Hobbies : Singing, dancing, reading, watching T.V., surfing internet, listening to songs and sketching.

Name : A.N. Manjunath

Age : 11

Address : Panchami, Behind Hindu Vidyalaya, Thuckalay (P.O.), Kollan Vilai, Nagercoil (via), Kanyakumari (dt.)

Hobbies : Collecting stamps and posters, reading books, watching T.V., cycling and playing musical instruments.



Name :

Md. Mahabubul Haque

Age : 18

Address : 31/A, Belvedere Road,
Bhabani Bhawan (Alipore),
P.H.E. Block B-21, 6th Floor,
Kolkata - 700 027.

Hobbies : Playing cricket and
carrom, reading books and playing
video games.

Name : **Jehan Sajar Shroff**

Age : 9

Address : 19, Yogeshwar Society,
Nr. Dharnidhar Devasar, Bhatta, Paldi,
Ahmedabad - 380 007.

Hobbies : Reading, drawing, play-
ing cricket, basket ball and badminton,
doing magic tricks and making friends.

Name : **Adithi Kumar**

Age : 14

Address : A-1522, Kaveri Vihar,
P.O. Jamnipali - 495 450, Korba Dis-
trict, Chhattisgarh State.

Hobbies : Music, net surfing, com-
puter games, puzzles, drawing, arts and
crafts.

Name : **Nehal Kedia**

Age : 13

Address : K-18, New No.8, Anna
Nagar (East), Chennai - 600 102.

Hobbies : Reading Harry Potter and
other books, badminton, browsing
internet and making friends.

Name : **B. Aarbhi**

Age : 13

Address : New No.14, Patammal
Street, Mandaveli, Chennai - 600 028.

Hobbies : Listening to music,
making friends, reading books and
dancing.

Name : **S. Hrishikesh**

Age : 11

Address : Pooja Park Building-B,
Opp. Chintamani Nagar, Bibvewadi,
Pune - 411 003.

Hobbies : Playing chess, reading
books, writing stories, collecting
stamps and coins.

Name : **Mafrooha Noohu**

Age : 13

Address : 39, 3/1 Galle Face
Terrace, Colombo - 13, Sri Lanka

Hobbies : Reading, watching
TV., listening to music and surfing
internet.

LUCKY ME!



We had a spelling competition in our school. I came up to the fourth round in which our teacher called out the names of places. Suddenly, I heard the word "Ekkaduthangal" and without wasting a minute, I wrote it down correctly. Do you know how? Ofcourse, regular readers of and contributors to GOKULAM will instantly connect the name to the address of our dear magazine! Thanks to GOKULAM, I won the second prize in that competition!!

- P.M. Sreelakshmi, Std VIII,
Bangalore

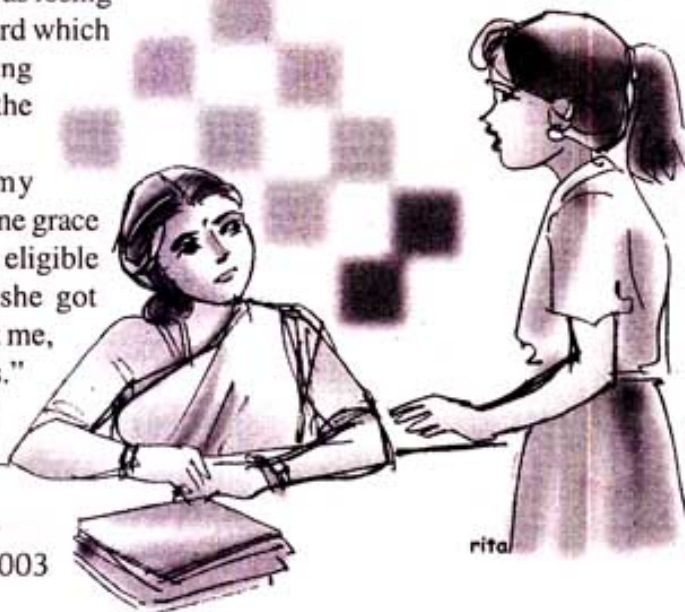
A 'MARKED' LESSON

This happened when I was in the eighth standard. I was sitting feeling sad and depressed on my seat, in the class. I had got 59/100, in my English language paper and hence was losing out on getting the golden card which was given to children scoring more than 60% marks in the examination.

I started pestering my English teacher to give me one grace mark so that I could become eligible for the golden card. But, she got very irritated and shouted at me, "Don't beg for your marks." These terse and abrupt words made a great impression on me. At

that very moment, I made up my mind never to demand grace marks. I have kept my word ever since.

- Archana Natarajan, Std.XI,
Kerala Samajam Model School,
Jamshedpur





"FIRE! FIRE!"

My parents and I were flying to Delhi from Kolkata to attend a cousin's wedding. It was my first flight. During the journey, I had my lunch and went

off to sleep. Suddenly I got up and on looking out of the window, spotted some sparks over the aircraft wings. I assumed that there was a major fire in the right wing. Terrified, I shouted out, "Fire! Fire!"

To my surprise, everyone looked around astonished and burst into loud laughter. After a minute, my father patted me and told me that it was the wing lights of our aircraft flickering and not a fire outbreak.

I turned red with embarrassment.

- Abhirup Sen
Std X, Kolkata

A 'CLIPPED' EXPERIENCE

It all began because of my twin, Jayaprakash. If he had not pestered our father for a toy when we were going on the bike, the accident would not have happened. I ended up damaging my teeth, making a visit to an orthodontist necessary. The doctor has now fixed clips on all my teeth, bound them together by wire and has given a big list of dos and don'ts regarding care of my teeth. The worst part is, I can't have my favourite pizzas or chocolates for the next one and a half years! I have to be very careful about keeping my teeth clean, to prevent ulcers. I have to go to the orthodontist for a month



after month regular check up. Thank god, all this torture will be over in 1½ years!

- Deepika Prakash
Age 15, Alpha Matriculation
Higher Secondary School,
Chennai

TEN COMMANDMENTS

T.S. BALU



The most damaging
one - letter word:-
9 - Avoid it.

5

The most pleasing
five - letter word:-
SWGSE - Keep it.

2

The most satisfying
two - letter word:-
WE - Use it.

8

The most nefarious
eight - letter word:-
JEALOUSY - Distance it.

3

The most poisonous
three - letter word:-
EGO - Kill it.

6

The fastest spreading
six - letter word:-
RUMOUR - Ignore it.

9

The most powerful
nine - letter word:-
KNOWLEDGE - Acquire it.

4

The most used
four - letter word:-
LOVE - Value it.

7

The most enviable
seven - letter word:-
SUCCESS - Achieve it.

10

The most essential
ten - letter word:-
CONFIDENCE - Gain it.

BUDDING WRITERS, TAKE HEART!

R. BALASUNDARAM

The year was 1912.

As the writer sat at his desk, the broad ideas regarding the story-line came tumbling out - The scion of an English family of Nobles, born in tropical Africa where his parents died when he was one, how he was found and brought up by a she - ape, how he grew

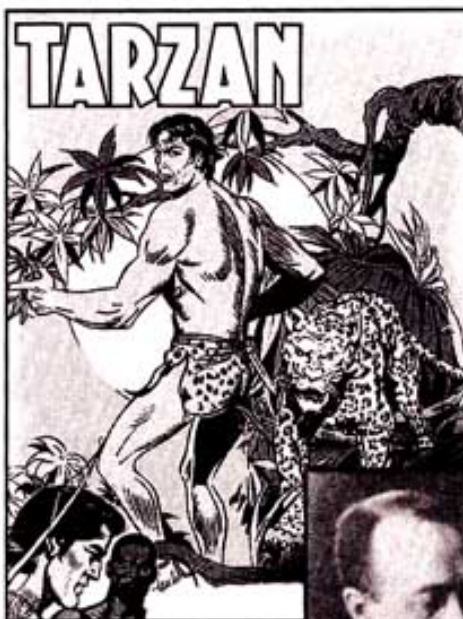
up to be a brave and fearless man and so on. The writer, however, was not able to decide on a name for his brave hero. He wrote 'Zantar' and then scored it off. Next he wrote down 'Tublat-Zan'. This was more awful than the first, he

thought. This too was struck off. Then, it came to him in a flash. He would call his hero.... TARZAN.

Thus was born the legend of Tarzan. The writer was **Edgar Rice Burroughs** who earned considerable

name and fame with Tarzan although he had written other novels as well. The first Tarzan story, "Tarzan of the Apes - A Romance of the Jungle" appeared in the October 1912 issue of the All-Story magazine and proved an immense

hit with readers. This was followed by two more novels, hundreds of comic books, radio and television programmes, Tarzan toys, Tarzan gasoline, etc. More than forty Tarzan films were made, in many of which, Olympic swimming champion Johny Weissmuller played the role of Tarzan.



* the hero



* the author

The first story of Tarzan would have never been written but for one man - Thomas Metcalf. Thomas Metcalf was the editor of the All-Story magazine. In

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Dear Readers,



* You are most welcome to send in your contributions to **Gokulam** either by post or by e-mail.

Remember every contribution sent by you should give details of your

- **Name, Age, Class, Name and address of school, Residential address and a declaration stating that the contribution is your original creation (if not, the source must be mentioned).**

However, we cannot guarantee that your contribution will be published. It is also not possible for us to tell you when it will be published. But, if you require your contribution to be sent back to you on rejection, then you must enclose a self addressed, stamped envelope.

- Editor

PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATE

You will receive a **participation certificate** from us if your contribution is published. At the end of the one year period ending June 2004, the person with most number of participation certificates will receive a special prize.

the previous year, Edgar Rice Burroughs had written his first novel "Under the Moons of Mars", an exotic tale of love, war and adventure on Mars. Metcalf had accepted it for publication and it proved a big hit with All-Story readers. Now, Metcalf thought that Burroughs was the right person with his racy style and colourful description to write a novel about the warriors of ancient England and assigned him the task. An enthusiastic Burroughs wrote a novel "The outlaw of Torn" in two weeks flat and surprised Metcalf. Burroughs was shocked when the novel was rejected by Metcalf in double quick time. The ease with which he had sold his first novel and its success had given him the feeling that he could be a successful writer. This rejection brought him down to earth and he felt he could never make a living as a writer. He was totally shattered.

It was then that Metcalf encouraged Burroughs and told him to write what he liked and not what editors of magazines wanted. Burroughs started writing again and the legend of Tarzan was born. Tarzan continues to entertain readers and viewers, young and old to this day.

Budding writers should take heart from the experience of Edgar Rice Burroughs and should not be dejected by rejection of their literary works. They should continue writing with renewed enthusiasm and if they are really talented, success is sure to follow, sooner or later.

STAMPS GALORE!

FAROEES ISLANDS NEAR SCOTLAND



Source: Faroese
stamp news
Sent by: J.P.Dhiviya
Kondur



STAR RENDEZVOUS

The next celebrity to be featured will be announced in the
November issue of Gokulam -Editor

CALCIUM FOR STRONG BONES!

● V. Lata Nadar, Mumbai

Do we really have more bones in our body when we are born? How does it become less later?

! Bones begin to develop long before birth. Initially they look like membranes formed by connective tissue. Then the cartilages replace these membranes. Bones gradually replace the cartilages as we grow. On birth, we have both bones and cartilages numbering more than 300. Cartilage is a rubbery tissue found at the ends of long bones. The ends of long bones unite with the cartilages to grow. This is called ossification. This growth process functions throughout childhood and adolescence and stops functioning when the person reaches adulthood. Thus, in adolescence we have 206 bones only.

● Sushmita, Bangalore

How does even a slight fall break our bones? How can we strengthen them?

! A break in a bone is called a frac-

ture. The extent of a fracture depends on the person's age, the type of fall and its force, health of the person and the size of the bone. During childhood, the bones contain a larger proportion of collagen than they do in adulthood and hence bones are not easily broken by falls during childhood. In old age, most of us have a disease called osteoporosis. It is a condition where the bones lose their minerals and have holes in them. They are at this stage, easily broken even by a slight fall. The development and strengthening of the bone depends on the presence of vitamin-D, which regulates the absorption of calcium and phosphate in the intestine. Milk, eggs and codfish are good sources of vitamin-D and calcium. Moderate exposure to sunlight im-

* 206 only



Your Next Topic

FOOD AND DIGESTION

Send in your questions to

Dr. G.Ganesan, c/o Gokulam

47-NP, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Ekkaduthangal, Chennai - 600 097

E-mail : gokulam@kalkiweekly.com

Last date : **20.10.2003**

proves absorption of vitamin-D in our skin. Bones are also strengthened by exercise.

● **N.G.Vijaya Gopal, Hyderabad**

My bones are very weak and I am very thin. What should be the diet to make my bones stronger? Can I take iron syrup?



! Consult your family doctor to find out the cause for your weakness. Take the treatment accordingly. Usually a calcium rich diet makes the bones stronger. Milk, butter, cheese, eggs, meat, green leafy vegetables, cod liver oil and sea foods can provide you enough calcium

* Over 300 and vitamin-D for the development of your bones. Iron syrup cannot help you in this purpose.

● **T.M.Kavitha, Salem**

Please enlighten me on the Osteoporosis disease and its preventive measures.

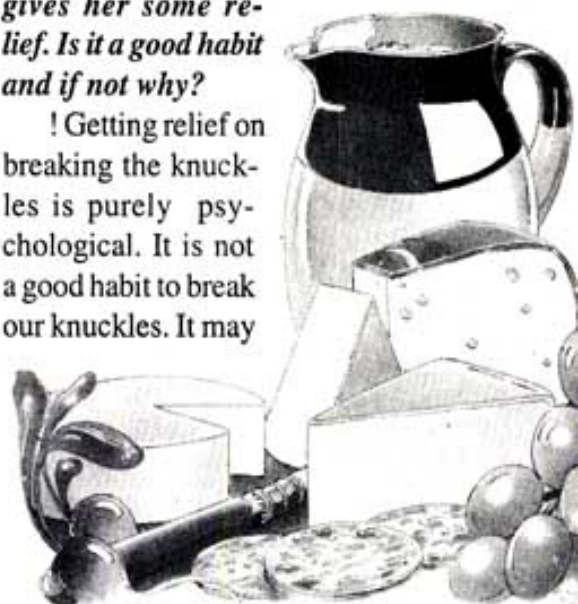
! Osteoporosis is a disease caused by loss of bone tissue. Normal bones are hard and dense but in osteoporosis, the bones become porous and thin. They are extremely fragile and more likely to break. Minor injuries like a slight fall may break these bones easily. These broken bones occur typically in the hip, spine, and wrist. Osteoporosis results from lack of female hormone (namely oestrogen) after the age of 40,

lack of physical activity, insufficient intake and /or absorption of calcium and as a result of natural loss of bone mass that occurs as a person grows older. Both oestrogen drugs and calcium supplements may slow the disease process. To prevent osteoporosis, we recommend a life long combination of regular exercise and a calcium-rich diet. Exercise encourages more minerals to be deposited in the bone matrix.

● **P.Uthara Priyadarshini, Thane**

My friend has a habit of breaking her knuckles often and she says it gives her some relief. Is it a good habit and if not why?

! Getting relief on breaking the knuckles is purely psychological. It is not a good habit to break our knuckles. It may



reduce the amount of synovial fluid present between the joints. This fluid is very essential for lubrication of the joints and to reduce the friction caused by the movements of the joints.

**More on the same topic
next month...**

MEENA'S ONAM

Meena was very excited. "It's Onam tomorrow!" she thought joyfully, happiness bubbling up in her heart. Meena had come all the way from Chennai to her village in Kerala for this special occasion.

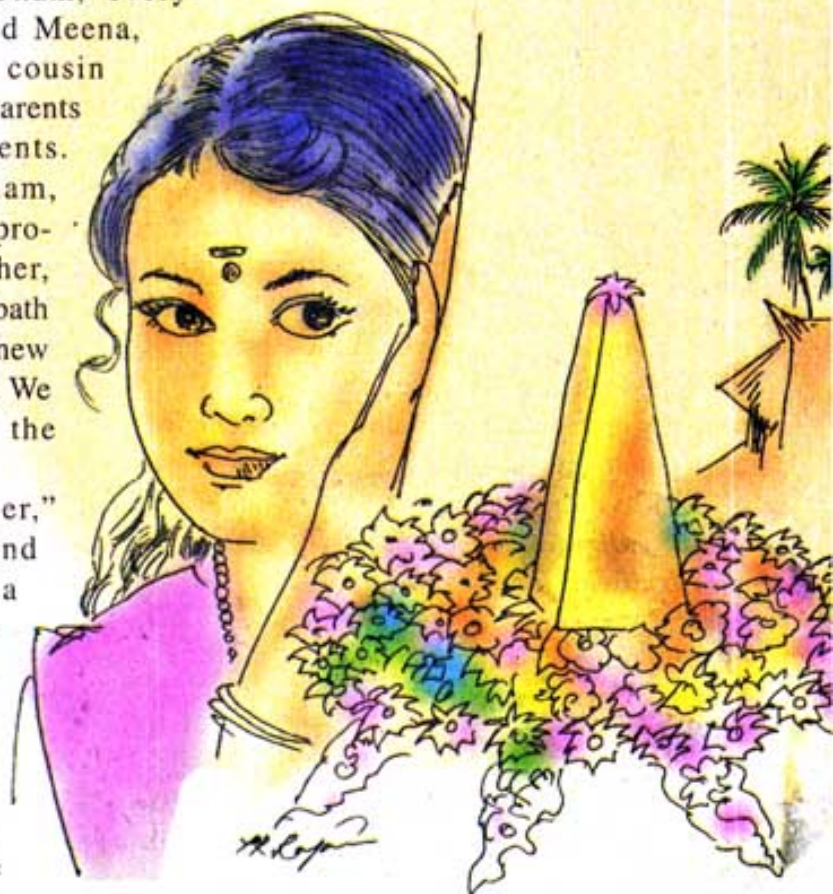
"Happy Onam, everybody!" shouted Meena, greeting her cousin Sindhu, grandparents and her parents. "Happy Onam, Meena!" reciprocated her mother, "Go and have a bath and wear your new skirt and blouse. We have to do the 'pookolam'."

"Yes, Mother," said Meena and came back in a short while looking very pretty in her new blue skirt and blouse.

"Come here, Meena. Let me put these flowers on your hair," said granny. Sindhu, too joined the group. She was wearing a green skirt and blouse.

"I am ready to do the 'pookolam'," said Sindhu.

So all of them, including granny, mother and aunt went to the courtyard where Sindhu's mother had already drawn a beautiful pattern on the cement ground.



"Let us arrange the flowers," said Meena.

There were many different kinds

of flowers kept for decoration. They had a wonderful time decorating the pattern with flowers.

After the '*pookolam*' was over, they visited the nearby Sri Guruvayoorappan temple. They prayed for peace and prosperity. The priest gave them '*prasadam*', '*chandan*', and '*kumkum*' on a banana leaf.

They came home to a sumptuous breakfast of '*noolputtu*' and '*ishtu*'. The '*ishtu*' made of potatoes, onions and coconut milk, made the thread-like structure of the '*noolputtu*' soft.

The rest of the morning was spent in playing and helping out in the kitchen for an even grander lunch!

have it! There were a number of delicacies like the '*sharkara upperi*' (dried banana dipped in jaggery), banana chips, long beans fry, '*vazhakkai upperi*', '*koottu*', '*olan*', '*avial*', '*khichdi*' and '*pachadi*'. To round it all off there was '*Semiya payasam*' for dessert!

In the evening, all of them went to the temple fair where many interesting and varied stalls were put up! Meena and Sindhu had fun shopping for bangles, hair clips and bindhis! "Mother, please let us buy '*pazhampori*'," begged Meena. Mother bought all of them the delicious snack - bananas sliced, dipped in maida batter and deep fried.

They didn't get the same ones in Chennai, so it was even more enjoyable!

After some time they went to the temple from where the elephant procession was just starting. There were musicians with their drums and pipes. There were lot of firework displays which lit up the dark skies and made everyone go 'ooh' and 'aah'!

After a grand dinner, the long



It was a traditional lunch served on banana leaves. They had to sit down on the floor, cross-legged to

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen, nor touched... but are felt in the heart."

- Helen Keller

- Haritham, Kerala

"Genius is one percent inspiration and Ninety nine percent perspiration."

- Edison

- B. Kirankumar,
M.H.School, Proddalur



GOLDEN WORDS

- The word education comes from the greek word 'Educi' meaning - make a man think.

- A single conversation across the table with a wise man is worth a month's study of books.

- Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow.

- They can conquer who believe they can.

- Swati Joshi, Std.IX,
S.D.M.T.P.P. School, Orissa

awaited Onam festival came to an end. Meena was tired but happy, to go to bed and dream about elephants, fireworks and 'pookolams'!

- N. Lakshmi Krishna Kumar,
Std. VIII, Prince M.H.S.School,
Chennai.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ★ The asura king, Mahabali, who met his end at the hands of Lord Vishnu, in his *Vamana Avatar*, is believed to visit Kerala during Onam.

- ★ People of Kerala celebrate Onam and sing the '*Onampattu*', the Onam ballad, celebrating the glorious reign of Mahabali in the ancient times.

- ★ There is the traditional Kathakali dance, a slow ladies dance called *Thiruvathirakali*, a fast dance called *kai kottikali* and ofcourse the Onam feast, *Onasadya*.

- ★ Though there are ten Onams, the celebrations are mainly spread over 4 days, the most important being *Thiruonam* which was celebrated on September 8th, this year.

- ★ The most famous is the *Vallamkali* or snake boat regatta held in *Allepy*.

- ★ The procession of caprisoned elephants in Thrissur is equally famous.

- A.N.B. Pillai,
Wg. cdr. (Retd.), Chennai

"TRADITIONAL GAMES ARE FUN!"

Here are the names and descriptions of the games, illustrated on pages 8 and 9. It is time for you young, modern children to start playing these games with your friends and family and experience the fun!

❶ 'Gilli danda'

Gilli danda is a game played with a stick and a peg. This is a team game requiring a good deal of outdoor space.

❷ 'Marbles or goli'

Marbles or goli was once very popular with children. There are numerous variations of this game and the rich colours of the marbles fascinate youngsters.

❸ 'Parama Padam'

Modern day '*snakes and ladders*' is based on '*Parama Padam*', which is what the Pandavas and Kauravas played in Mahabharata. The game was believed to be symbolic of man's attempt to reach God. The ladders represent virtues and the snakes represent vices. The snakes carry names linking them to stories from our epics.

❹ 'Pandi'

This game '*Pandi*' is the popular 'hop-scotch' game played predominantly by girls. It requires good agility and suppleness. Lines are drawn on the floor or sand and a flat piece of stone is used.



Pallanguzhi

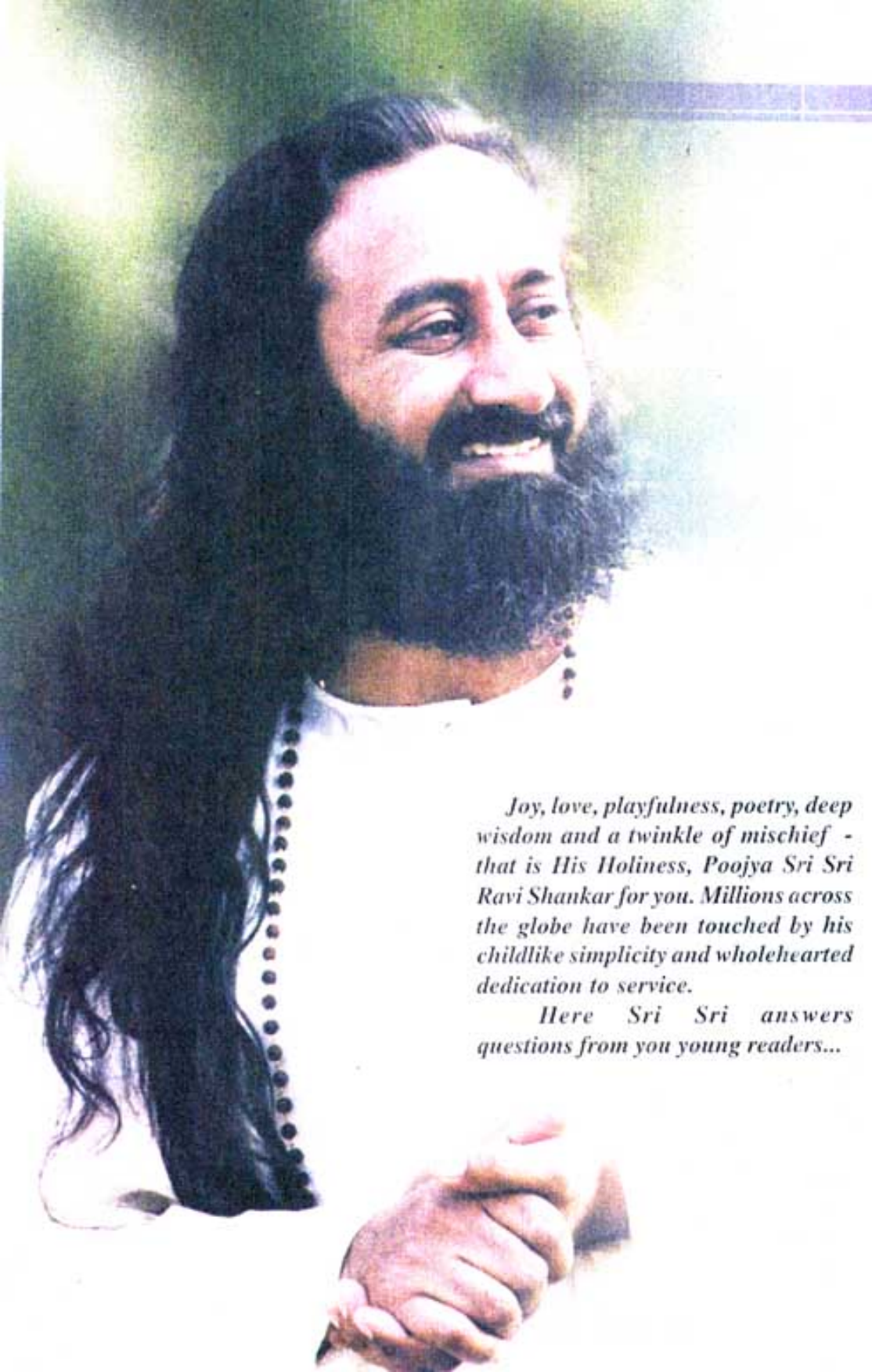
Pallanguzhi is played on a wooden board with seven small circular pits on either side, by two people. This is a game of distributing and counting. There are different variations of the game for various age groups, making it challenging and exciting.

❺ Seeds and shells; stones and pebbles

A number of games are played with *tamarind seeds, cowrie shells, stones or pebbles*. These games require great skill and excellent hand-eye co-ordination.

❻ 'Daya Kattam'

Four players can participate in this game much akin to '*Ludo*'. The purpose is to take your counters from the starting point to the safety of home. Even eatables like peanuts, cashewnuts or plain sugar candy were used as counters! This was more fun as one could actually '*eat up*' their counter as soon as it reached 'home'!



Joy, love, playfulness, poetry, deep wisdom and a twinkle of mischief - that is His Holiness, Poojya Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for you. Millions across the globe have been touched by his childlike simplicity and wholehearted dedication to service.

Here Sri Sri answers questions from you young readers...

THINK GOOD SPEAK GOOD DO GOOD

● Shwetha, Mangalore

Why do we Indians wear a Bindi?

In-between eyebrow centre is *agya chakra*, also called the pituitary gland. You have to wear something to stimulate this pituitary gland and also to keep emotional balance and stability. It also makes sure that you don't get too obsessed and excited. It keeps you in poise. But it doesn't work if the material is plastic. Only bindies made with turmeric, sandalwood, and kumkum would stimulate this area.

● Shilpa Menon, Jamshedpur

How can I be a good girl?

What makes you think you are not a good girl? Just list out all the things that make you think you are a bad girl. And then you would know that these are all only temporary and that you are basically a good girl.

● Sowmya Vasu, Chennai

What is the basic difference between Dwaita, Adwaita and Vishishtadwaita

Adwaita means that everything is made of atoms; Dwaita means there are different types of atoms, like the molecules are all different; Vishishtadwaita means ice, water and

steam are all different, yet they are one.

● R.Navin, Madurai

I am a good boy. But sometimes, bad thoughts enter my mind. How do I control my thoughts?

Don't try to control your thoughts. Let them come, never mind.

● P.Ashwini, Mumbai

How to be a good friend of all?

We have to assume what we want to become. If you want to be a good friend of all, you should assume that you are one.

● S.Aishwarya, Secunderabad

How to gain confidence in my ability to study well?

You should do some pranayam, breathing exercise. Don't watch too much television.

● Binoy Sarangi, Cuttack

We, as common people get attracted towards fake pleasures and attractions. How do they not lure saints like you?

Just like toffees charm nursery class, and a college student would not be charmed by the toffees. An ice cream on the other hand, would be more appealing to the college student.

● R. Sriram, Chennai

I often lose my temper over small

petty things. As a result I don't feel calm and relaxed. Please suggest how I can overcome these sudden bursts of anger?

Take some time out for yourself. Meditate, watch the sunrise and sunset.

● **Sachin Chitpur,**
Gulbarga

How can a student be relieved from tensions of today's competitive world?

By confidence and courage.

● **Pallavi Mohapatra,**
Bhubaneshwar

Today in India, there are hundreds of spiritual gurus who have wonderful oratory powers. Do they really practise what they preach? What do you think?

We should not judge anybody. May be the guru can also ask how the disciples deceived the masters in the past, from Jesus to Buddha, but a Guru doesn't judge. A wise person doesn't judge. We look into ourselves and take whatever wisdom we get along the path of our life.

● **Kuntal Satpathi, Korba**
How to be free from exam tension?

Know that God is with you in every step of your life, to take you by hand.

● **Ritu Gopal, Secunderabad**
I took the Art Excel course



three years ago. Why is there an age restriction for the Basic Course?

At a particular age you would appreciate it better.

● **G.M.Loganathan, Erode**
How can I identify my talents and improve upon them?

Talent is something that you can't contain, it will come in an out - burst. It happens automatically.



● **Sankar Ramakrishnan, Mumbai**

How can we improve our concentration?

Just love what you do.

● **Madhulika Saikumar, Chennai**

How did you control yourself in childhood when your friends teased you?

I am still a child and I welcome all teasing. I enjoy it!

● **Michael Ranjit Singh, Chennai**

How do I know I exist?

Are you asking this question? How do you know you are asking this question?

● **Rakesh Dange, Bangalore**

What is the secret of a happy life?

Let it be a secret for you to discover!

● **Sudhindra, Mangalore**

Is there any effect on the mind of a person by the food he eats? If so, what kind of diet should we take to have a peaceful mind?

Yes, there is. If you eat too salty, pungent or too hot food, then thoughts go up and down. Always eat in moderate quantities.

● **Shekin M.Eapen, Munnar**

Doing 'good' for the sake of getting 'salvation' is good or not?

Yes, it is good.

● **Amulya Pradhan, Puri**

Why did you choose this path as saint?

Why shouldn't I choose what I could?



RITVI AND GRANDPA ACHAPPA

Oops! The tea container fell and the tea leaves spread all over the floor. Ritvi just stood and stared at Grandpa. "Never mind Ritu, clean it up and then you can make some coffee for amma," said Achappa.

Ritu carefully lit the gas stove after striking the lighter nearly three times! "Next time switch on the gas after you apply the lighter," said Grandpa firmly and clearly. "An important lesson to be learnt, for sure," thought Ritu to herself. She carefully poured the boiling water into the coffee filter and learnt the art of making coffee. "Mmm! Tastes yummm ..!" said Grandpa sipping it. "So you are ready with the surprise gift for amma now," he said, smiling at her.

After the lesson, they went into the garden and watched the rose plant in full bloom. As they went around their little garden, sparrows began to chirp and Grandpa went in quickly to bring some paddy grains, which he scattered for them. Soon, about a dozen sparrows gathered around, pecking at them. The sun was slowly beginning to set and amma was late.

Ritvi caught Grandpa's anxious glance from the corner of her eye. She knew Grandpa was

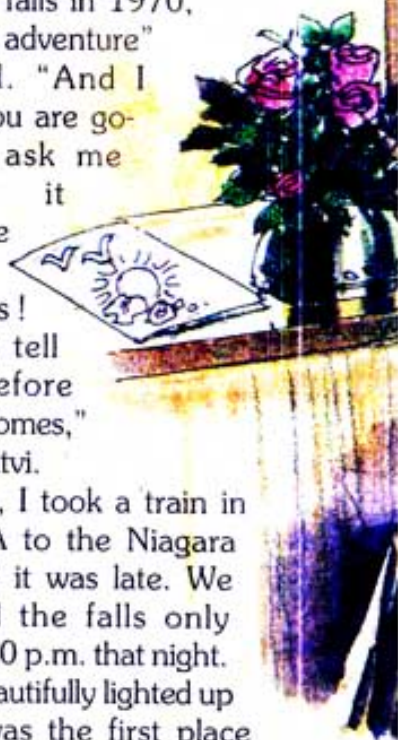
using watering the plants, as a pretext to look out for amma. There was a small waterfall that Achhappa had created in the corner with pebbles and stones and had named it, 'The Indian Niagara'.

"Why have you named it 'Niagara'?" asked Ritu watching Achhappa arrange the light close to the waterfall, so that it lit up beautifully!

"Oh, when I went to Niagara falls in 1970, I had an adventure" he said. "And I know you are going to ask me what it was," he added.

"Yes! Quickly tell me, before amma comes," urged Ritvi.

"Well, I took a train in the USA to the Niagara falls and it was late. We reached the falls only around 10 p.m. that night. It was beautifully lighted up and it was the first place that I was visiting in the US. I was amazed at the sight. I took the



"Maid of the mist" ride and went into the Canadian side of the

falls too, the next day. When I reached the station I heard that the train was delayed. I then had to take a bus to a place called Syracuse. I was anxious and worried for I was to leave for India from New York the next day.

As I was worrying over this problem, Shivakumar, an Indian, helped me to sort it out. "Don't worry!" he said. "I am staying with a friend called Jayakumar and his wife and you can stay there tonight with me. I will drive you back tomorrow myself,"

he offered. So, I stayed that night at Jayakumar's house, had good Indian food and he gave me this light as a gift. I will never forget their timely help.

In an unknown part of the world, I found a good friend. That is why I made this waterfall with a birdbath near it so that all the birds can come and drink this water. Now do you understand, Ritu," Grandpa said teasingly.

"A mma is here," screamed Ritu and they all went in. They exchanged their stories for





the day over dinner and Ritvi went to bed.

"Someday I too will visit Niagara falls," she thought thinking of Achhappa's expressions as he was narrating the incident. She quickly took out an empty card and drew a beautiful house, the sun, some birds and flowers and wrote "Happy Birthday, Amma" and slowly creeping into Amma's room, left it on the side table.

The early sun shone through the window and Ritvi got up earlier than usual and slowly began to boil the water for making coffee.

Lakshmi thought it was her father as usual and woke up. She saw the card and near them a bunch of fresh and fragrant flowers. Lakshmi read the card. "Happy birthday to you, dear daughter from Achha and Ritvi".

Lakshmi's eyes welled with joy. As she came towards the kitchen, she saw Ritu preparing coffee.

"Special coffee for a special person," she said as she brought the coffee in a mug and kept it on the coaster on the table. She gave her mother a warm hug and Lakshmi was so proud to have the affection of both her father and her daughter.

"What more could any mother ask for," she thought to herself. "Wow! This coffee tastes better than Achha's," she said smiling at Achappa. Grandpa gave her an answering smile and joined them to drink coffee.

That evening they all went to the ice-cream parlour for large, tall glasses of Hot Chocolate Fudge, their favourite ice cream.

They then came home, played a game of Chinese Checkers and went to bed. Lakshmi removed her glasses and wondered how long it was since her husband had been away. She was already forty one and Ritu was growing into a lovely teenager.

"How time flies," she thought. "It is now nearly 10 years since Ritvi's father has been away."

'Accept life as it comes,' her father's soothing words rang in her ears and Lakshmi did not know when sleep overtook her.



To be continued...

**Kathalaya -
The House of Stories**
E-mail:
kathalaya@vsnl.net.in

TERRORISM AND COUNTER TERRORISM!

Powerful bombs placed in taxis exploded in Mumbai, killing a few and injuring several people. The incident is stated to be a revenge for some brutal killings which took place in Gujarat. Whatever be the reason, such terrorist attacks are

not the answer to any problem. Innocent people are being killed for no fault of theirs.

Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Ariel Sharon visited India recently and met our Prime Minister. He promised all help to India to fight terrorism. Israel believes that terrorism can be put down by force or counter - terrorism. But that is not the real answer. This was proved by the fact that Sharon had to cut short his visit to India and rush back to Israel since there were a couple of suicide bomb attacks in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem by suspected Palestinian terrorists. Terrorism breeds terrorism and counter- terrorism breeds more terrorism. The real path to peace is through hand shakes, talks to understand each other and some amount of give and take to clinch a permanent solution and agreement.



* Ariel Sharon with Vajpayee

and joined Yadav's Samajwadi Party. Mulayam Singh Yadav is sitting pretty but decency in democracy has given way to 'Ayarams' and 'Gayarams'. When MLAs have no loyalty to their leader, party or its principles how can they be expected to be loyal to the people who elected them?

Having failed in her attempt to take over the entire Queen Mary's college premises for her ambitious project of a new secretariat, Chief Minister Jayalalitha has now turned her eyes to-

wards the vacant grounds belonging to Anna University, in Kotturpuram. There are a lot of educational institutions in and around this area besides a few tourists spots. What the traffic congestion would be if the secretariat is also situated here, is anybody's guess!

* Mulayam Singh Yadav



The Spices

Story & Illustrations
j. disney



IS HE
TRYING
TO WIN
ALL THE
MEDALS
IN THE
SPORTS?



PUFF..
PUFF
PANT..



CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP...



NOW I AM FULLY
PREPARED TO TAKE ON
THIS 'TOUGH'
MATHS PROBLEM



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Launching 10 centres on Vijayadashami Day at Madurai